それでも町は回っている

Soredemo Machi ha Mawatteiru

石黒正数

Ishiguro Masakazu

5

YOUNG KING COMICS

通称"それ町"

それでも町は廻っている

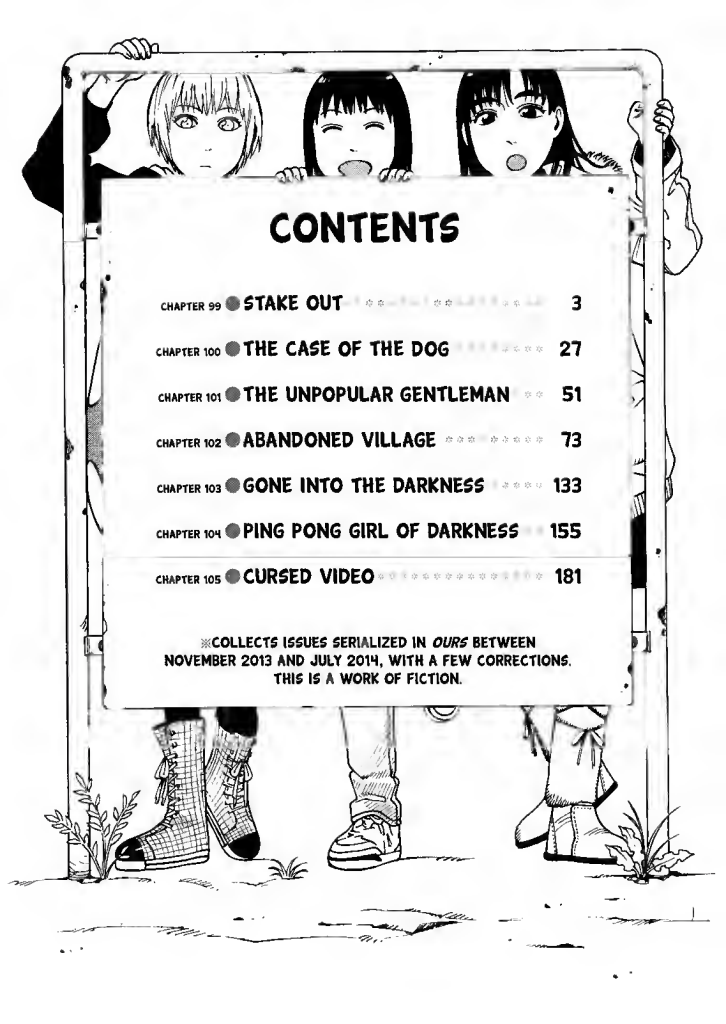
AND YET, THE TOWN MOVES

13

石黒正数

ISHIGURO MASAKAZU

YOUNG KING COMICS



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※COLLECTS ISSUES SERIALIZED IN *OURS* BETWEEN NOVEMBER 2013 AND JULY 2014, WITH A FEW CORRECTIONS. THIS IS A WORK OF FICTION.

CHAPTER 99 STAKE OUT

WHAT A WEIRD THING TO SAY! CAN'T HE SAY IT MORE NORMALLY?
WHY "EBI-SAN"?

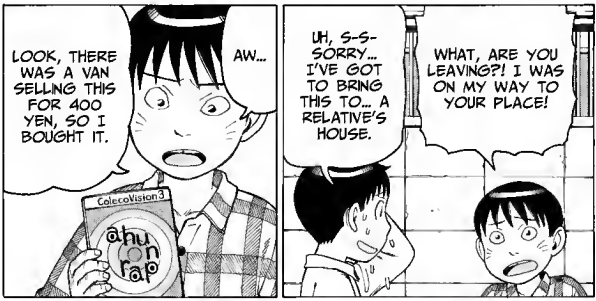
"PLEASE LET ME DATE EBI-SAN RESPONSIBLY."

ISEZAKI-SAN DOESN'T HAVE A DAD. DIVORCED.
OH? REALLY?

GOT TO MAKE A GOOD IMPRES-SION, ESPECIALLY ON HER DAD.
THAT'S CRITICAL! YOU'VE GOTTA THINK OF THE FUTURE.

WISH ME LUCK!

SPEAKING OF WHICH, WHEN EXACTLY DO YOU PLAN TO INTRODUCE A BOYFRIEND TO YOUR FATHER?

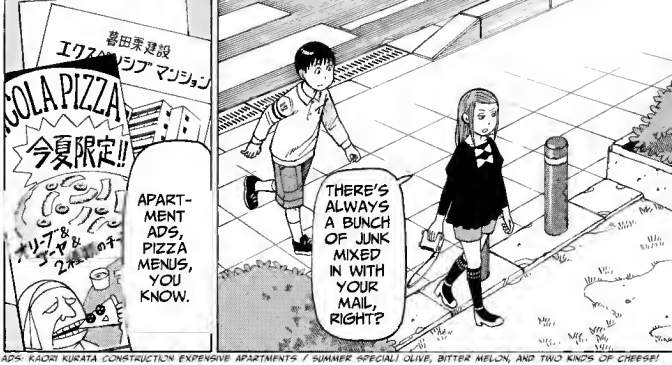

LOOK, THERE WAS A VAN SELLING THIS FOR 400 YEN, SO I BOUGHT IT.
AW...
ColecoVision
UH, S-S-SORRY... I'VE GOT TO BRING THIS TO... A RELATIVE'S HOUSE.
WHAT, ARE YOU LEAVING?! I WAS ON MY WAY TO YOUR PLACE!

OKAY! ABOUT THIS TIME TOMORROW? I'LL BE THERE!
SURE!
I CAN PLAY TOMOR-ROW.
IT'S A REAL CONFUSER※. THOUGHT WE COULD PLAY IT TOGETHER.
12

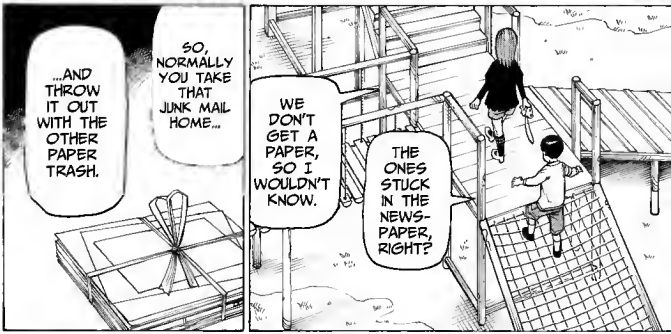
※CONFUSER: A GAME WHERE YOU CAN'T FIGURE OUT WHAT TO DO.

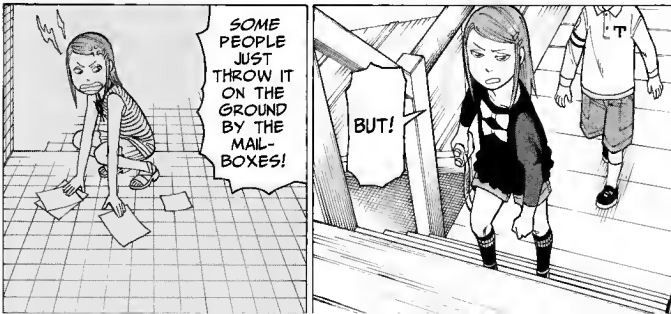
"PLEASE LET ME DATE EBI-SAN..." NO, NO.
UM... "I'M ARASHIYAMA. SORRY FOR EVERYTHING."
NO, NOT THAT...
BA-DUMP
BA-DUMP
BA-DUMP
ドキ
ドキドキ
ドキ
DING DONG
ピーンポーン
NAMEPLATE: ISEZAKI
504
伊勢崎
CLICK
ガチャ
UM... HERE.
HEY.
OH, A GIFT? THANKS. MOM'S AT WORK, THOUGH.

WE'RE NOT GOING IN?
DID YOU WANT TO?
UH... NO... I'M FINE.
HM...
NOT YET, HUH?
?
I NEED YOUR HELP...
...TO TRACK DOWN SOME BAD GUYS!

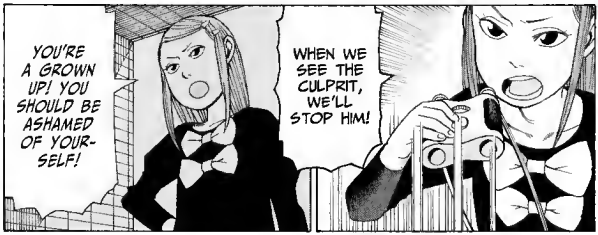


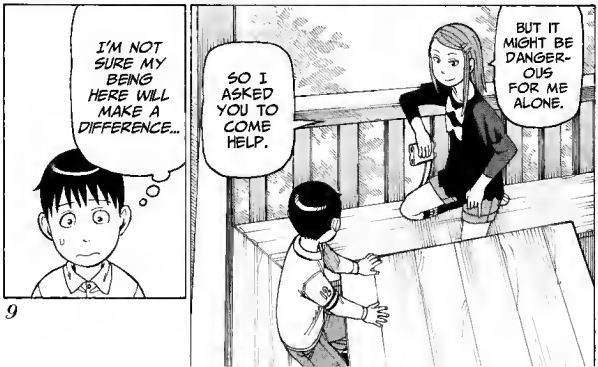
ADS: KAORI KURATA CONSTRUCTION EXPENSIVE APARTMENTS / SUMMER SPECIAL! OLIVE, BITTER MELON, AND TWO KINDS OF CHEESE!

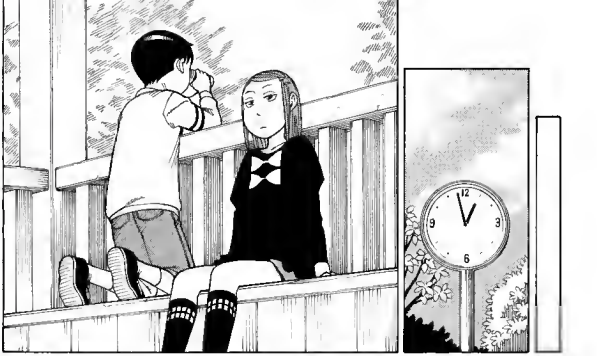

SO, NORMALLY YOU TAKE THAT JUNK MAIL HOME...
...AND THROW IT OUT WITH THE OTHER PAPER TRASH.
WE DON'T GET A PAPER, SO I WOULDN'T KNOW.
THE ONES STUCK IN THE NEWS-PAPER, RIGHT?

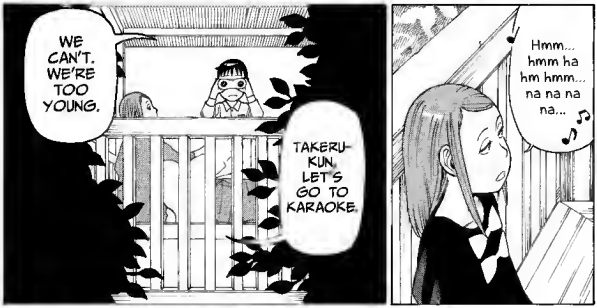


SO WE'RE GONNA STAKE IT OUT...
...FROM THE PARK ACROSS THE STREET.


WHEN WE SEE THE CULPRIT, WE'LL STOP HIM!
YOU'RE A GROWN UP! YOU SHOULD BE ASHAMED OF YOURSELF!


BUT IT MIGHT BE DANGEROUS FOR ME ALONE.
SO I ASKED YOU TO COME HELP.
I'M NOT SURE MY BEING HERE WILL MAKE A DIFFERENCE...



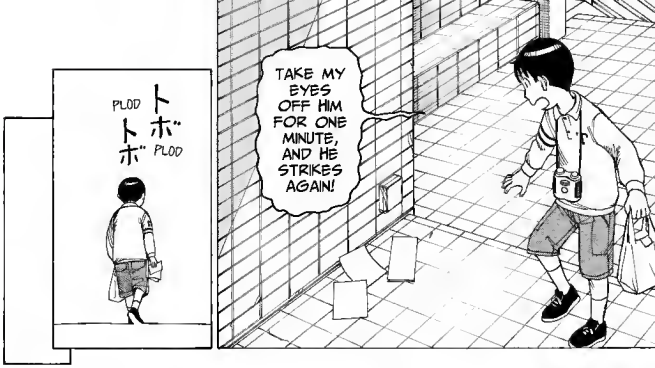

Hmm... hmm ha hm hmm... na na na na...
TAKERU-KUN, LET'S GO TO KARAOKE.
WE CAN'T. WE'RE TOO YOUNG.

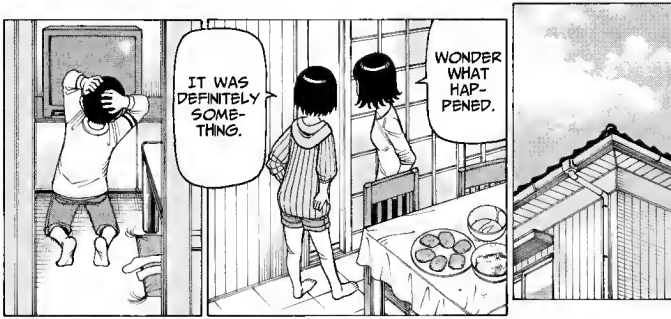
URGH!
THUMP
どすっ
OW.
IF YOU'RE BORED, WE COULD STOP.
I'M NOT BORED!

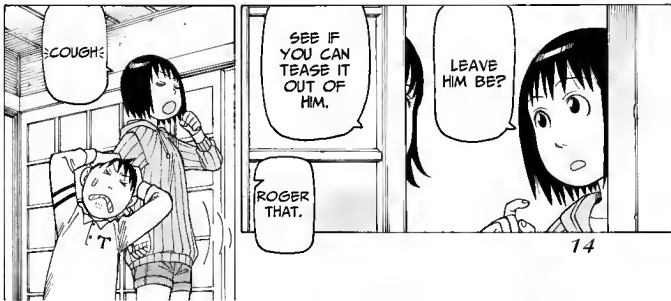
HM?
SO...
ARE WE DATING?
.....
.....
D...
D...?

THE LAST CATALOG, I WORKED WITH A BOY MODEL MY AGE. KENTO TESHIGAWARA.
YOU KNOW I MODEL KID'S CLOTHING, RIGHT?
...UH...
I...
UH... ER...
...ARE WE?
...!!
TOMORROW!!
WELL, KENTO ASKED ME OUT!
WHY ASK ME?
I DON'T...
WHY WOULD I...?
MIND IF I GO?
MAKE UP YOUR OWN MIND.

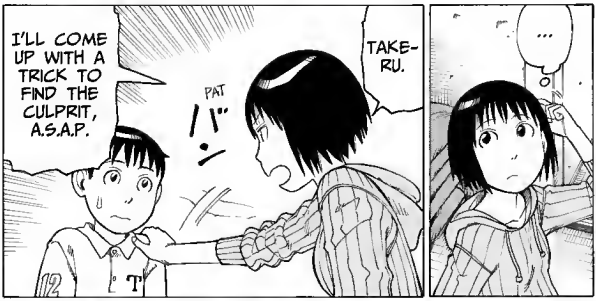
WE'RE DONE HERE.
EBI-CHAN!
WAIT!
AHH!
...


TAKE MY EYES OFF HIM FOR ONE MINUTE, AND HE STRIKES AGAIN!
PLOD
トボ
トボ
PLOD


IT WAS DEFINITELY SOME-THING.
WONDER WHAT HAP-PENED.

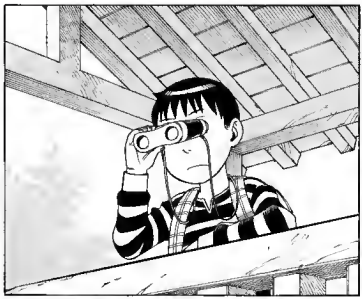

COUGH
SEE IF YOU CAN TEASE IT OUT OF HIM.
LEAVE HIM BE?
ROGER THAT.

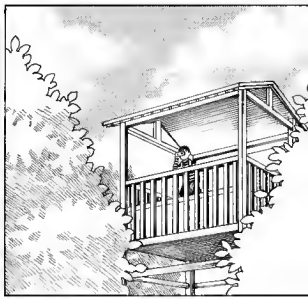
HMM, HMM.
A WAY TO FIGURE OUT THE POSTAL LITTERER'S IDENTITY?
YOU'RE PLENTY GOOD AT THAT SORT OF THING.
I'VE GOT A LOT ON MY MIND...

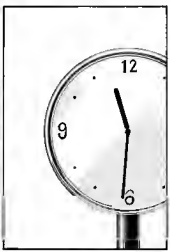

...
TAKE-RU.
PAT
パン
I'LL COME UP WITH A TRICK TO FIND THE CULPRIT, A.S.A.P.

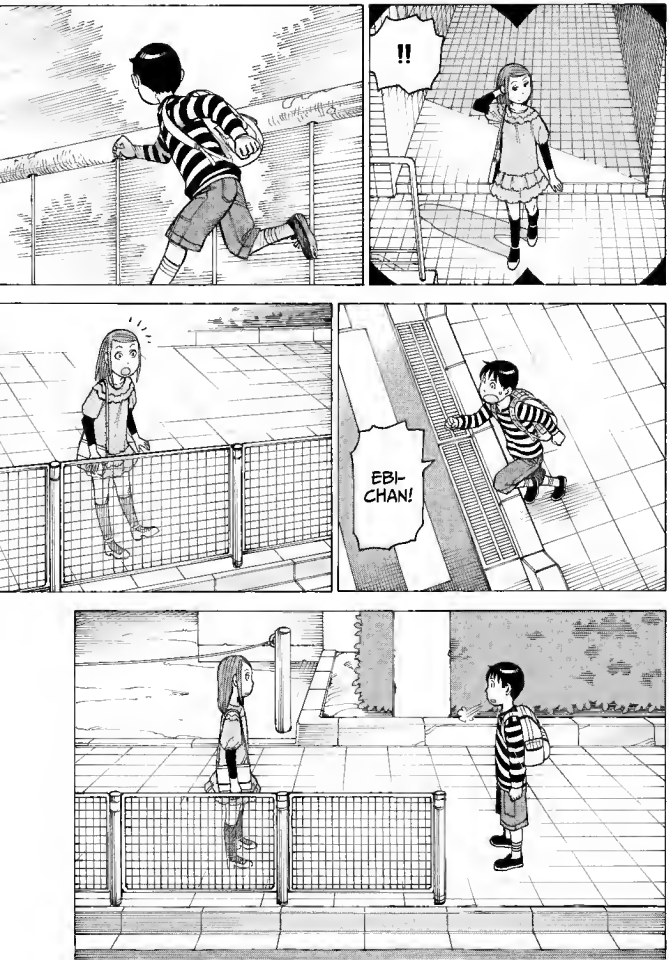
BUT THERE ARE SOME THINGS MERE TRICKS DON'T FIX.
SUCH AS...
...MATTERS OF THE HEART.

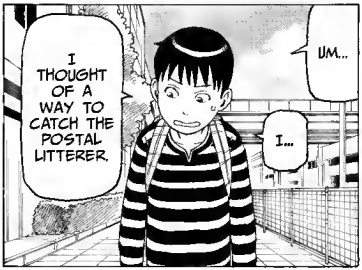
SHIRT: 3.26 LIGHT YEARS



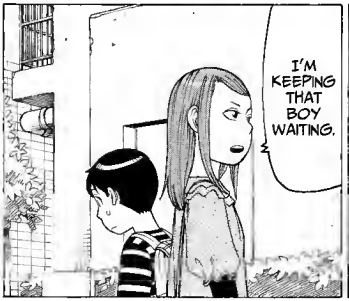





!!
EBI-CHAN!


I THOUGHT OF A WAY TO CATCH THE POSTAL LITTERER.
UM...
I...

WHAT DO YOU WANT?


I'M KEEPING THAT BOY WAITING.

...

SO?

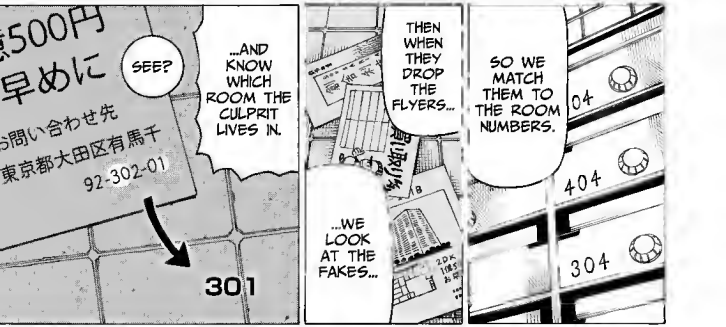
PLEASE.
...YOUR HELP.
I'D LIKE...

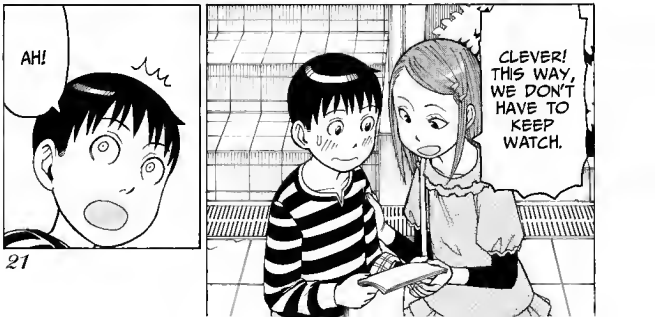
SO...!

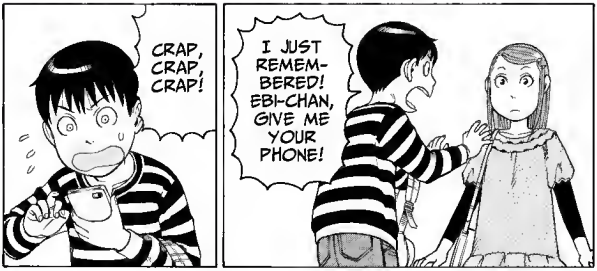
I SHOULDN'T GO?
AND MY DATE?
YEAH.
BEEP
スチャ
OKAY.

BOY-FRIEND?!
BOY-FRIEND?!
'SUP.
OH, KENTO?
ABOUT TODAY... MY BOY-FRIEND SAYS I CAN'T.
SO?
PAY ME NO MIND! JUST A PASSING GRANDMA!
OH HO HO HO HO
UH... WHO... ARE YOU?
YEAH, SORRY!
OH, RIGHT.
HOW WE GONNA FIND THIS GUY?

お早めに
お問い合わせ先
東京都大田区有馬千
92-105-01
東京都大田区有馬千
92-105-02
東京都大田区有馬千
92-205-01
92-205-03
THERE'S A HIDDEN NUMBER IN THE ADDRESS ON EACH FLYER.
ADS FOR A FAKE APART-MENT.
MY SISTER MADE THESE.
AD: BAKER 2218, 2DK, 100,000,500 YEN. HURRY! GOT ANY QUESTIONS? TOKYO, OTA, ARIMASEN


500円
早めに
お問い合わせ先
東京都大田区有馬千
92-302-01
SEE?
...AND KNOW WHICH ROOM THE CULPRIT LIVES IN.
301
THEN WHEN THEY DROP THE FLYERS...
...WE LOOK AT THE FAKES...
SO WE MATCH THEM TO THE ROOM NUMBERS.
404
304


AH!
CLEVER! THIS WAY, WE DON'T HAVE TO KEEP WATCH.


CRAP, CRAP, CRAP!
I JUST REMEMBERED! EBI-CHAN, GIVE ME YOUR PHONE!

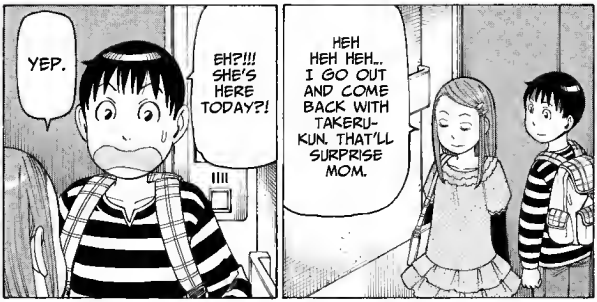
I WAS UP ALL NIGHT FOR YOU...
MM? YEAH, I WAS ASLEEP...

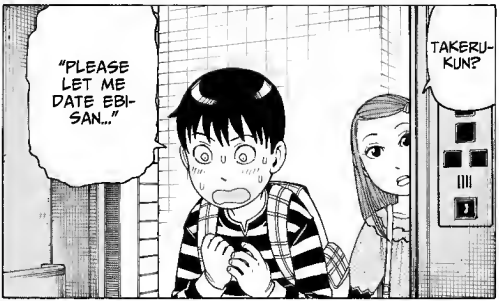
HOTORI!
PHONE FROM TAKERU!

DO SOME-THING? LIKE WHAT?
HUH?
OH, HE'S HERE.
TAAAA-KEEEERU-KUUUN!
KNOCK
KNOCK

HUH? MAKKI'S COMING?
YOU WHAT?

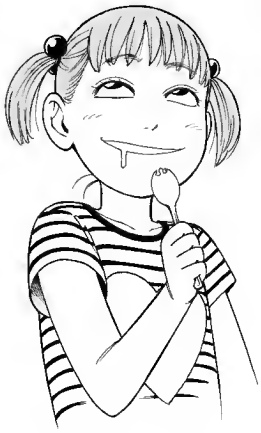
EH? HE'S SICK?
YEAH, SORRY.
POOR TAKERU...
:COUGH:
:COUGH:
:COUGH:
:COUGH:
HE'S SICK IN BED. IT'S PRETTY NASTY.
WHEW.
GLAD THAT TRICK WORKED.
:KA-COUGH:
THERE WE GO.
THAT'S ALL OF THEM.





CHAPTER 99 / END

YUKIKO'S
FAVORITE FOODS



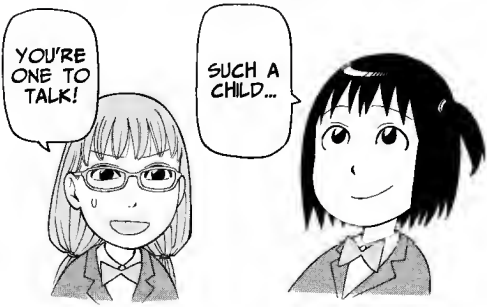
KITSUNE
UDON

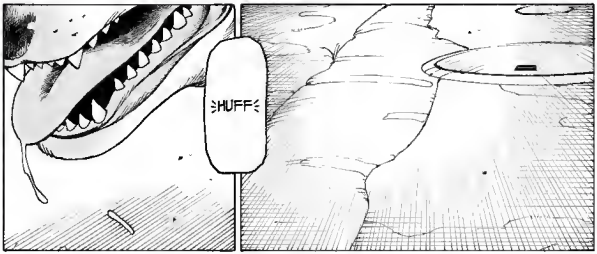
SAKURA
MOCHI

COCOA

CHICKEN
NUGGETS

EGG
TOFU

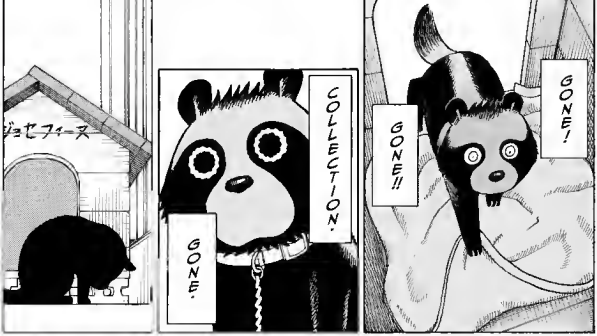


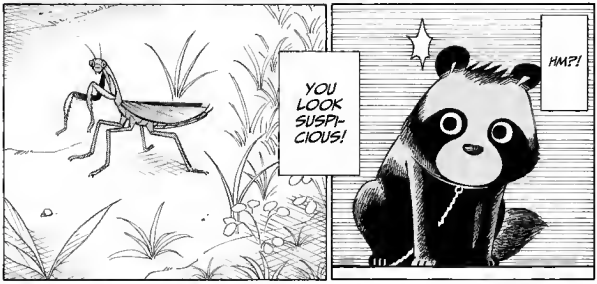

HUFF

HUFF
HUFF
HUFF

CHAPTER 100 THE CASE OF THE DOG

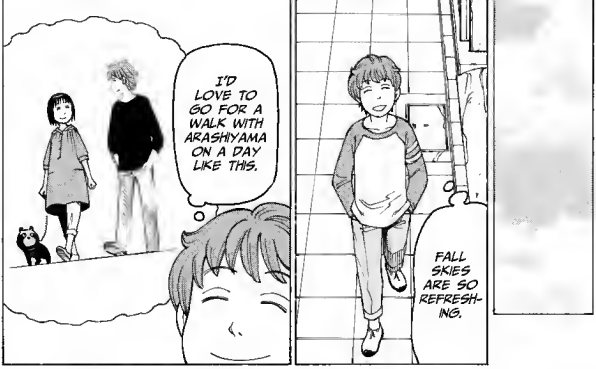
HMPH.
ジョセフィーヌ
IT'S COOLED DOWN OUTSIDE.
YOU'LL LIVE IN THE GARDEN UNTIL WINTER.
HOUSE: JOSEPHINE
FIRST, I SHOULD INSPECT IT CAREFULLY.
IT BRINGS BACK MEMORIES.
ジョセフィーヌ
BACK TO MY OLD HOME.
COLLECTION...
CLEAR!
BED.
HOUSE.
ジョセフィーヌ
CLEAR!

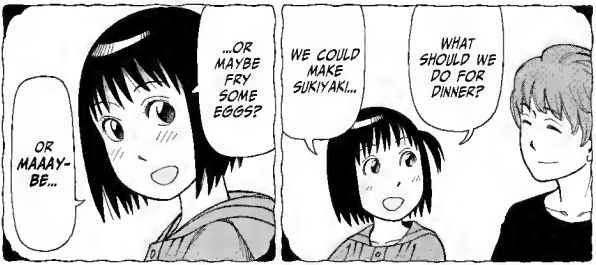

GONE!
GONE!!
COLLECTION.
GONE.
ジョセフィーヌ


HMP!
YOU LOOK SUSPI-CIOUS!

HISSs フム～
ANYONE INVADING MY TERRI-TORY...
...WILL BE PUR-GED!
JOSEPHINE...
...PUNCH!

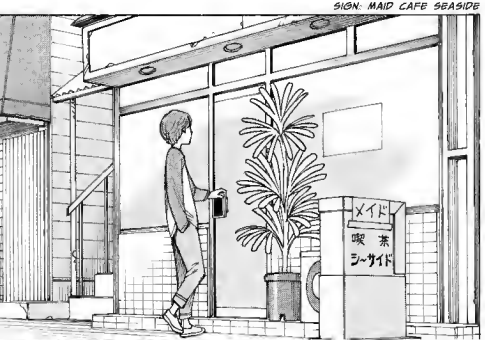
FWIP
GUH!
SNAP
YOINK
WHINE
FLAP
FLAP
SHONK
EVEN THOUGH IT'S MORNING!
AH!
JOSEPHINE'S STILL ASLEEP!


I'D LOVE TO GO FOR A WALK WITH ARASHIYAMA ON A DAY LIKE THIS.
FALL SKIES ARE SO REFRESHING.


...OR MAYBE FRY SOME EGGS?
WE COULD MAKE SUKIYAKI...
WHAT SHOULD WE DO FOR DINNER?
OR MAAAY-BE...

JUST A QUICK QUESTION!
DOES THE WORLD NO LONGER ALLOW DAYDREAMS?
AUGH!

SIGN: MAID CAFE SEASIDE

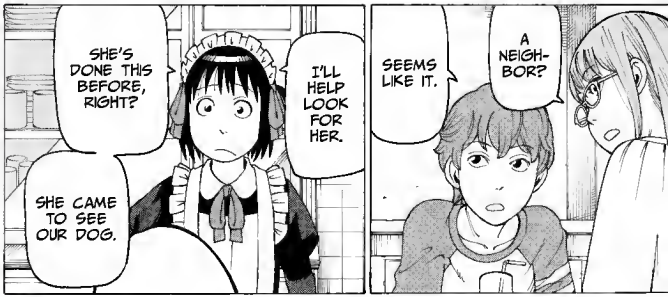


PICTURE THIS!
カラン
カラン
DING
DING
A CUSTOMER LIKE THIS ONE ENTERS!
HE TAKES A SEAT!
SAUCE KATSU DON.
AND ORDERS A THING NOT ON OUR MENU!
WHAT THEN?
THAT ORDER...!
チラ
GLANCE
NOD
コクリ
SLIDE
シャーッ
FWIP
チャッ
臨時休業

SIGN: CLOSED

I'M INVESTIGATING A CASE.
TELL US MORE.
SANADA-KUN, YOUR ORDER?
GOT IT.
ICED CAFÉ AU LAIT.
EVERYONE IGNORED ME...
THIS!
WE NEED TO DO THIS!
THAT'S MY POINT!
..SOLVING A CASE.
THIS WOULD BE A PERFECT DAY TO RUN AROUND OUTSIDE...
IT'S A SUUUPER PEACEFUL DAY.
SIGH.

HEEELP!
MY HIME-CHAN!
SHE'S GONE MISS-ING!
MY, MY.
CALM DOWN, ABE-SAN.
HOW CAN I BE CALM AT A TIME LIKE THIS?!

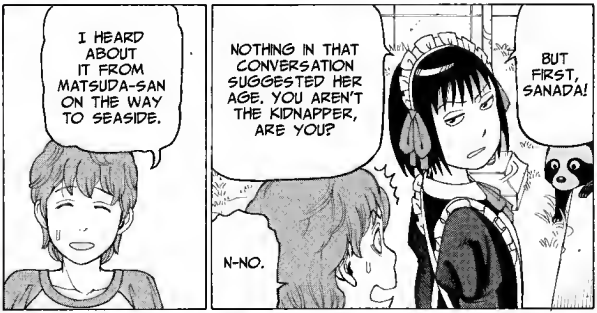

A NEIGH-BOR?
SEEMS LIKE IT.
I'LL HELP LOOK FOR HER.
SHE'S DONE THIS BEFORE, RIGHT?
SHE CAME TO SEE OUR DOG.

I ONLY TOOK MY EYES OFF HER FOR A SECOND!
WHILE I WAS DOING LAUNDRY AND WATCHING GOLDEN COP* RERUNS.
QUITE A LONG SECOND.
AND I FOUND THIS AT THE DOOR...

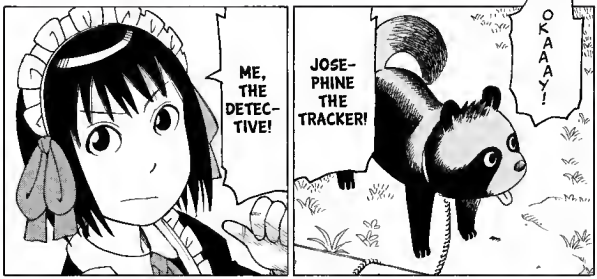
*A TV DRAMA.

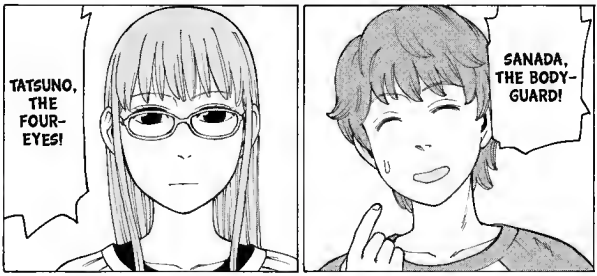
WOULD THIS BE A THREE-YEAR-OLD FEMALE?
YES! EXACT-LY!
WHAT, DID YOU SEE HER?
NO, I HAVEN'T! I JUST... DEDUCED IT FROM WHAT YOU SAID!
OKAY!
I'LL BE OUT LOOKING FOR HIME-CHAN!
GOOD LUCK!
I'LL COME, TOO.
カラン DING
カラーン DIING
LET ME HELP, TOO!

I'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO DO A SNIFF SEARCH!
FINALLY... IT'S TIME TO USE THE ARASHIYAMA FAMILY'S SECRET WEAPON!


I HEARD ABOUT IT FROM MATSUDA-SAN ON THE WAY TO SEASIDE.
NOTHING IN THAT CONVERSATION SUGGESTED HER AGE. YOU AREN'T THE KIDNAPPER, ARE YOU?
N-NO.
BUT FIRST, SANADA!

TRYING TO USURP MY CASES!
I'VE GOT TO FIND HER FIRST.
MAN, HE MUST BE SUPER BORED.
THE COPS ARE LOOKING, TOO?!
WHAT?!


ME, THE DETEC-TIVE!
JOSE-PHINE THE TRACKER!
OKAAAY!


TATSUNO, THE FOUR-EYES!
SANADA, THE BODY-GUARD!

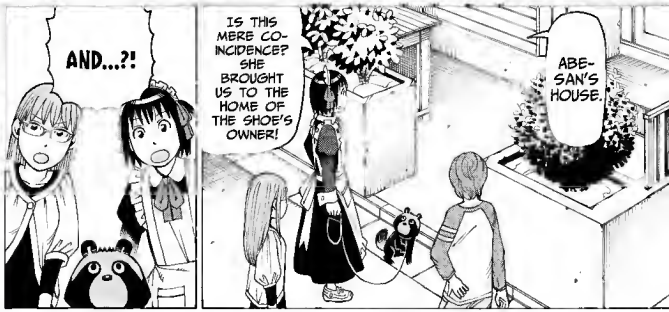
BACK UP A BIT!!
THE GIRLS' DETECTIVE CLUB BEGIN THEIR SEARCH!

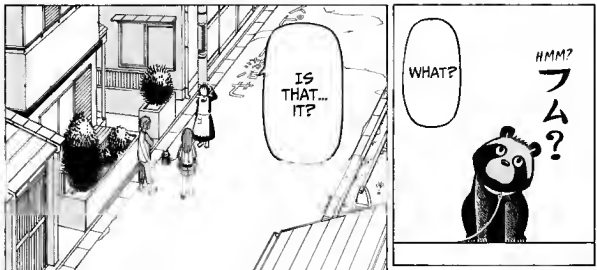
TATSUNO THE SEDUC-TRESS!
R-RIGHT, OKAY...
WHY AM I "TATSUNO THE FOUR-EYES"? THAT'S NOT EVEN A SKILL!
THIS WILL NOT END WELL.
HA HA HA! THEY'RE PAYING MORE THIS TIME! BYYYYE!
MR. PRESIDENT, CAN I SEE YOUR SECRET NOTEBOOK?
AUGH! TATSUN. WHYYY?!

GOT IT? CHASE THIS SCENT!
SNIFF
SNIFF

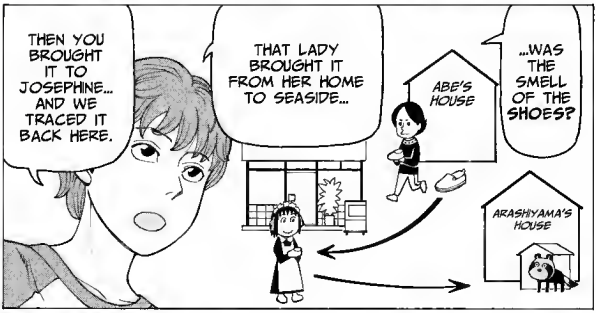
VERY WELL.
ALLOW ME TO IMPRESS YOU ALL.
JOSEPHINE...
...NOSE!
クンクンクン
SNIFF
SNIFF
SNIFF
SHE SMELLS SOMETHING!
OOH!
THIS WAY, EVERYONE!

AND...?
SEA-SIDE...


AND...?!
IS THIS MERE CO-INCIDENCE? SHE BROUGHT US TO THE HOME OF THE SHOE'S OWNER!
ABE-SAN'S HOUSE.

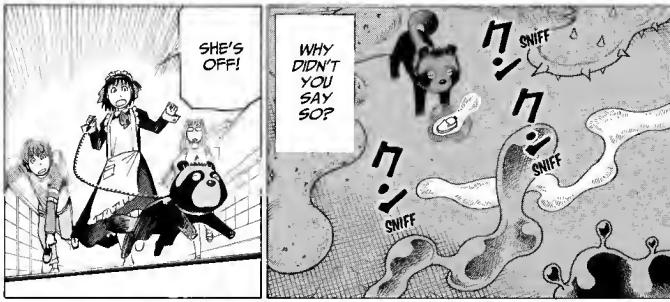

IS THAT... IT?
WHAT?
HMM?
フム?

PERHAPS WHAT JOSEPHINE FOL-LOWED...
ARASHI-YAMA... I DON'T KNOW IF DOGS REALLY MAKE JUDGMENT CALLS.
...


THEN YOU BROUGHT IT TO JOSEPHINE... AND WE TRACED IT BACK HERE.
THAT LADY BROUGHT IT FROM HER HOME TO SEASIDE...
...WAS THE SMELL OF THE SHOES?
ABE'S HOUSE
ARASHIYAMA'S HOUSE

NOT THE SMELL OF THE SHOE, BUT THE SMELL OF THE OWNER OF THE SHOE!
LISTEN, JOSIE, THE SHOE'S OWNER!
CAN WE GET HER TO DO THAT?
RIGHT, BUT WE NEED HER TO FOLLOW THE SCENT OF THE SHOE'S OWNER!

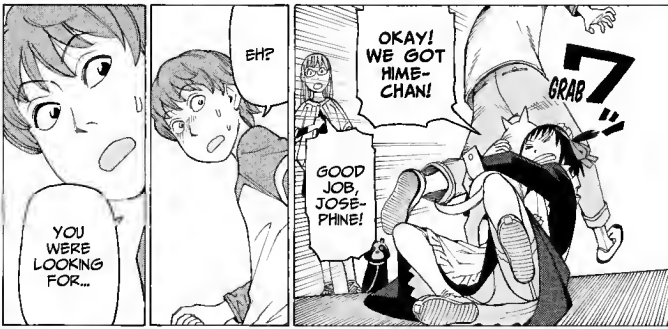
IN THAT CASE...
THAT'S WHO WENT MISSING!
GOT IT?

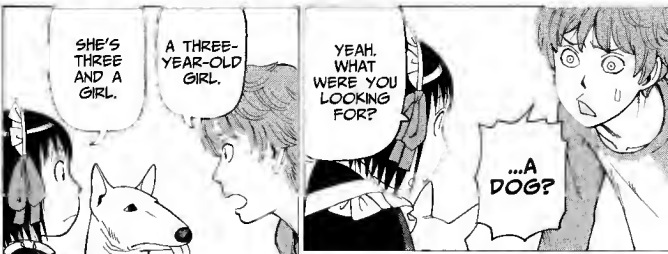

SHE'S OFF!
WHY DIDN'T YOU SAY SO?
クン SNIFF
クン SNIFF
クン SNIFF

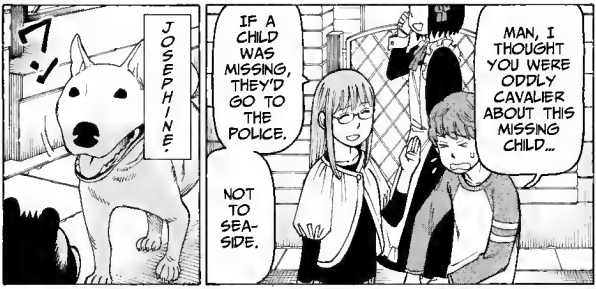
THINK WE'RE HEADED TO HIME-CHAN THIS TIME?
NO IDEA WORTH A SHOT!

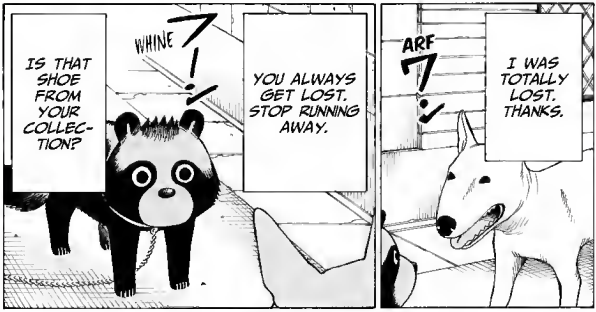
IN THAT GAP? LOOKS ABOUT RIGHT.
SHE STOPPED.
I DON'T MIND GETTING DIRTY. I'LL CHECK IT OUT.
EH?
CAN'T SEE A THREE-YEAR-OLD HIDING HERE...
HM?

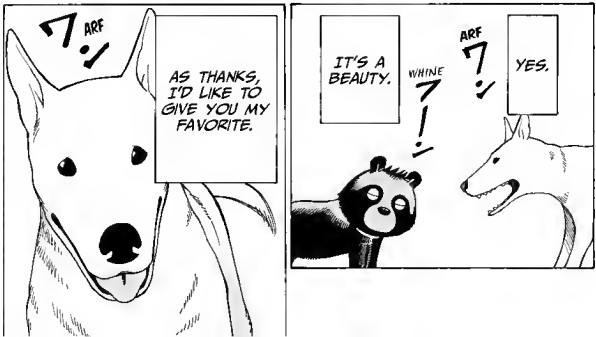
AAAA-AUGH!
SANADA, WHAT'S WRONG?!
AH- WHOA! WHOA! WHOA!
WHOA! DOWN BOY! GOOD DOGGIE!
AR- AR-ARF AR-AR- ARF


GRAB
OKAY! WE GOT HIME-CHAN!
GOOD JOB, JOSE-PHINE!
EH?
YOU WERE LOOKING FOR...

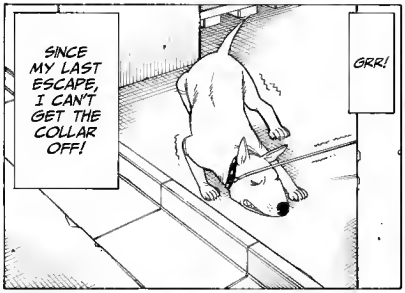

...A DOG?
YEAH. WHAT WERE YOU LOOKING FOR?
A THREE-YEAR-OLD GIRL.
SHE'S THREE AND A GIRL.


JOSEPHINE.
IF A CHILD WAS MISSING, THEY'D GO TO THE POLICE.
NOT TO SEA-SIDE.
MAN, I THOUGHT YOU WERE ODDLY CAVALIER ABOUT THIS MISSING CHILD...

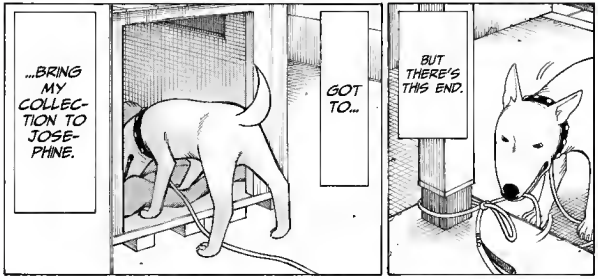

WHINE
IS THAT SHOE FROM YOUR COLLEC-TION?
YOU ALWAYS GET LOST. STOP RUNNING AWAY.
ARF
I WAS TOTALLY LOST. THANKS.


ARF
AS THANKS, I'D LIKE TO GIVE YOU MY FAVORITE.
IT'S A BEAUTY.
WHINE
ARF
YES.

THEY ENVY OUR COLLECTIONS.
BE CAREFUL THE HUMANS DON'T STEAL IT.
THANKS, BUT YOU SHOULD KEEP IT.
I'M SO GLAD WE FOUND YOU!
LET'S TAKE YOU TO MOMMY.
I'M SO GLAD WE FOUND YOU!



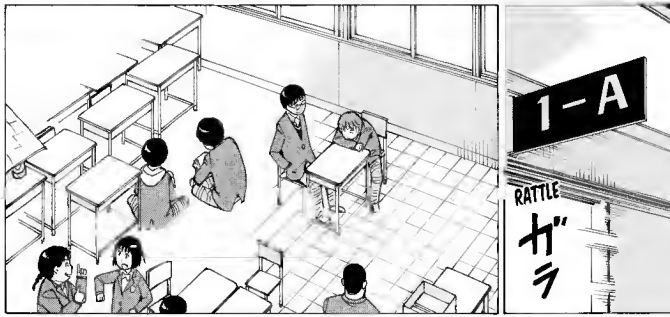
NAMEPLATE: ABE



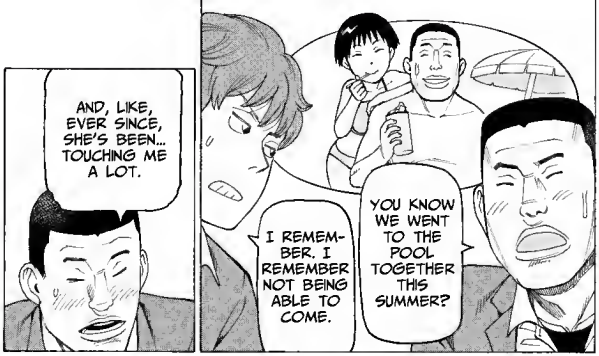
CHAPTER 100 / END

CHAPTER 101 THE UNPOPULAR GENTLEMAN

SIGN: 58TH OYA HIGH FESTIVAL



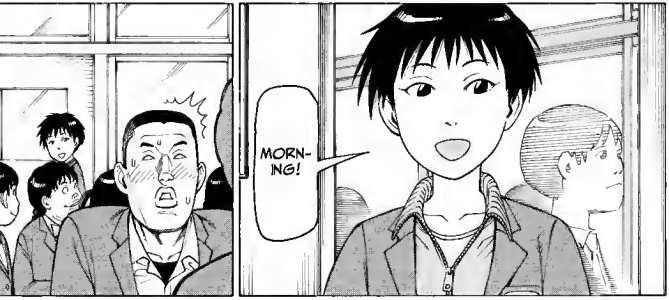
POSTERS. SCIENCE CLUB. ONCE IN A LIFETIME CHANCE! 1L OF SLIME FOR 200 YEN! / BUILDING 3RD FLOOR, 4TH BOOTH. / NEW! UNPRECEDENTED SCRY OR HAUNTED HOUSE! NORTH
CLASSES ARE ALWAYS A PAIN...
BUT JUST KILLING TIME UNTIL EVENING IS EXHAUSTING, TOO.
AND FOR THREE DAYS RUNNING.
I'M RUNNING THE FILM CLUB BOOTH ALL DAY TOMORROW, SO TODAY'S MY ONLY BAD DAY.
WELL, IF YOU'RE THAT BORED, MIND RUNNING A CONSULTATION CORNER?
WHAT? WHAT?
.....
.....
AHHH, I DUNNO...
SPIT IT OUT!
YOU KNOW MAI EBISU?
EBISU. RIGHT.


AND, LIKE, EVER SINCE, SHE'S BEEN... TOUCHING ME A LOT.
I REMEMBER. I REMEMBER NOT BEING ABLE TO COME.
YOU KNOW WE WENT TO THE POOL TOGETHER THIS SUMMER?

WAIT, I THOUGHT YOU HAD A THING FOR TATSUNO?
AND THAT'S ON YOUR MIND?
GOOD FOR YOU.

HE'S CONFUSING "EXQUISITE" WITH "EXPENSIVE."
I'VE ONLY GOT 1,000 YEN, BUT THAT FLOWER COSTS 5,000.
...AN EXPENSIVE FLOWER.
TATSUNO IS WHAT YOU'D CALL...

RATTLE
ガラ
IT'S NOT LIKE THERE'S ANYTHING BETWEEN...
LET'S FOCUS ON JUST WHY SHE KEEPS TOUCHING ME.


MORN-ING!

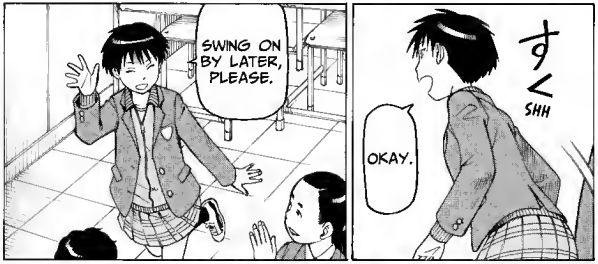
BOOST-ER SEAT?
I'LL JUST GRAB A BOOSTER SEAT.
I CAN'T STAY LONG.
DON'T WORRY.
NOT ENOUGH CHAIRS.
MORN-IN'!

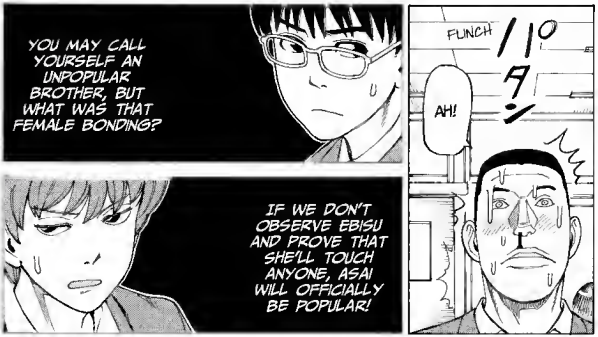
BOOST-ER SEAT.
GRAB!

WAH HA HA HA HA HA HA!
BOOST-ER SEAT!

...EVERY NERVE AND CELL IN ASAI'S BODY...
...BUT IN THAT MO-MENT...
SANADA AND SUZUKI SENT ASAI A SIGNAL WITH THEIR EYES...
YOU'RE RIGHT! SHE DOES TOUCH YOU!

...HE COMPLETELY MISSED THE SIGNAL!
SO BUSY SCANNING HER POSTERIOR...
...WAS FOCUSED ON HIS RIGHT KNEE!


SWING ON BY LATER, PLEASE.
すく SHH
OKAY.

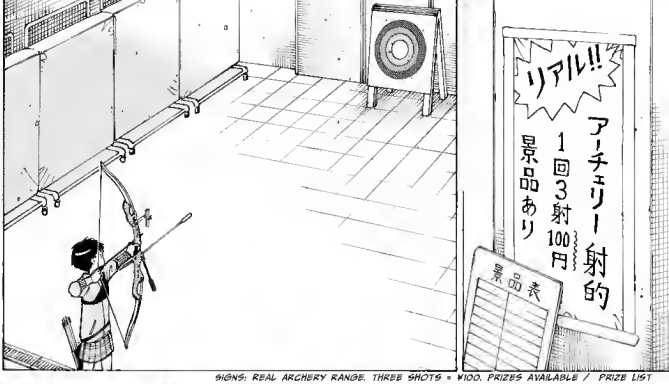

YOU MAY CALL YOURSELF AN UNPOPULAR BROTHER, BUT WHAT WAS THAT FEMALE BONDING?
IF WE DON'T OBSERVE EBISU AND PROVE THAT SHE'LL TOUCH ANYONE, ASAI WILL OFFICIALLY BE POPULAR!
FUNCH
AH!

BUT IF WE GET THERE TOO SOON, IT'LL BE SUSPICIOUS.
LET'S KILL TWO HOURS FIRST.
YEAH.
EBISU'S WORKING THE ARCHERY CLUB'S SHOOTING GALLERY TODAY.
SHE ASKED US TO COME BY.
SIGN: BATHROOM

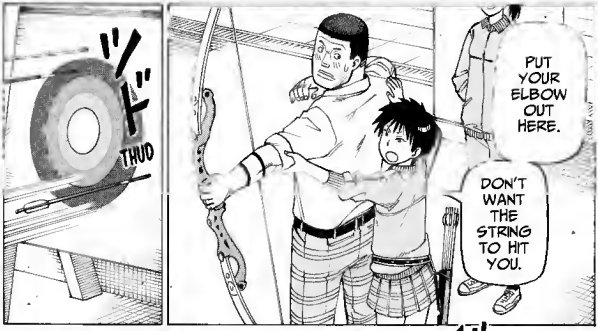
DESK: PLEASE SIGN IN / POSTERS: GALLERY, ART CLUB
BUT I DO GET IT.
THIS IS WHY HE'S NOT POPULAR.

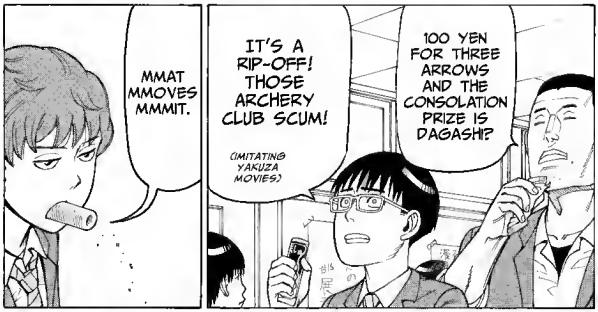
SIGN: SOBA
NON-STUDENTS ARE STARTING TO SHOW UP.
I'D DO THE SAME THING IN YOUR POSITION.
そば
SAT SUN / OKONOMI / SOBA / FINAL PIETY NEW ISSUE ¥500
THEATER, FRI

POSTERS: POWER OF ATTRACTION / LIVE CONCERT / MANGA CLUB ILLUSTRATION GALLERY, CLUB MAGAZINE ON SALE, FILIAL PIETY NEW ISSUE ¥500 / ART CLUB STABILITY GALLERY / OCCULT CIRCLE SPIRITUALISM EXPERIMENT
!
WHAT NEXT? GO BACK TO CLASS? FIND AN EMPTY CORNER?
LOTS OF COUPLES.
POSTERS: RHYTHMIC GYMNASTICS BARE LEG SPRING SHOW, ORIGINAL DANCE SHOWCASE IN THE GYM
POSTERS: TEA CEREMONY CLUB, OPEN AIR / ARCHERY CLUB
HEY!
AH...
POSTERS: ¥200 ENTRANCE FEE, PLAY ALL YOU WANT! / COMPUTER CLUB ORIGINAL GAME CENTER ROS, FIGHTING X II, LOVE DESTROYER VER. 5.1, PRO DEE, BRO
OR ARE COUPLES WE NORMALLY DON'T SEE TOGETHER SHOWING THEMSELVES?
THE FESTIVAL DRAWS PEOPLE CLOSER, I GUESS.
DON'T KNOW. BY HIS SHOE COLOR, HE'S A THIRD-YEAR.
AND THE GUY?
THAT WAS NAGAOKA (FROM OUR CLASS) RIGHT?
入場料200円でやり放題!!
電算部 オリジナルゲームセンター 200円
格闘X II
ラブ破壊 ver 5.1
ペロゴイ

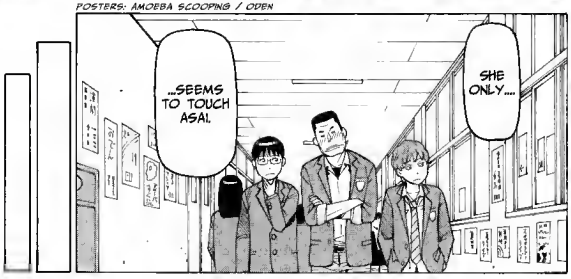


SIGNS: REAL ARCHERY RANGE. THREE SHOTS ¥100. PRIZES AVAILABLE / PRIZE LIST



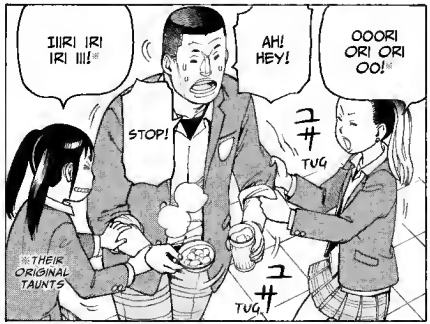

MMAT MMOVES MMMIT.
IT'S A RIP-OFF! THOSE ARCHERY CLUB SCUM!
(IMITATING YAKUZA MOVIES)
100 YEN FOR THREE ARROWS AND THE CONSOLATION PRIZE IS DAGASHI?

POSTERS: AMOEBA SCOOPING / ODEN



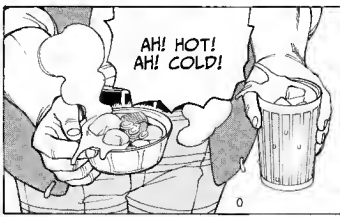
I CAN'T GET IN!
HUUUH?!
HEY, DON'T BLOCK THE DOOR!

1-A


IIIRI IRI IRI III!※
AH! HEY!
OOORI ORI ORI OO!※
STOP!
TUG
TUG
※THEIR ORIGINAL TAUNTS

THAT'S ONLY 'CAUSE YOU'RE A GIANT!

RIGHT, HOT! LEFT, COLD!
GYA HA HA HA HA!


AH! HOT! AH! COLD!

HUH? I DON'T CALL THOSE FLASHY THINGS GIRLS.
FOR AN UNPOPULAR GUY WHO'S NOT GOOD WITH GIRLS...
...YOU SURE HANDLED THAT WELL.
...ARE THE WORST!
THEY...
SUZUKI, YOUR EX-GIRLFRIEND CAME BY.
OH, RIGHT...
OH...?
?!

SUZUKI HAD A GIRLFRIEND BACK THEN.
...WHAT?!
SAME JUNIOR HIGH?

SO...
...PURE!

WE'D... GO TO THE PARK OR THE BOOK-STORE AFTER SCHOOL.
IT WAS ONLY FOUR MONTHS!

YOU'RE NO LONGER AN UNPOPULAR BROTHER!
OUT!

OUT? SAFE?

WELL, I'M NOT POPULAR.
BUT ASA! JUST MADE UP THE UNPOPULAR BROTHERS! I NEVER CHOSE TO JOIN!
WTF!
SANADA'S NOT UN-POPULAR.
バシ
SLAP
OH... RIGHT.
NOT EXACTLY A GOOD MEMORY.
SANADA REJECTED THE SOCCER CLUB MANAGER WHEN SHE ASKED HIM OUT IN JUNIOR HIGH!
EVERYONE KNEW!
...I DUMPED FLONE AND MARRIED VIVIAN.
LOOK, IN JUNIOR HIGH...
SHAKE
SHAKE
YOU'RE THE ONLY UNPOPULAR ONE!

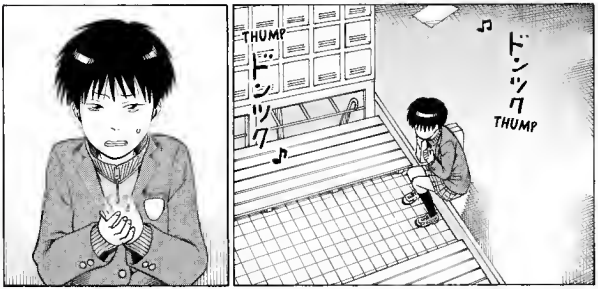
WHAT ARE THOSE FOREIGN NAMES?
HUH?
THAT'S A GAME, RIGHT?
CROC QUEST V!
YOU'RE KILLING ME!
YOU KNOW IT?
DESPITE THEIR JEERS, AT THAT MOMENT, ALL ASAI'S NERVES AND CELLS...
...WERE FOCUSED ON HIS BACK. HE HEARD NOT A WORD.
I THOUGHT YOU DIDN'T CONSIDER THEM WOMEN.
MY HEART REJECTS, BUT MY BODY ACCEPTS! CURSE IT!

YEAH... WE WERE INVESTIGATING THE WRONG THING.
I THINK THEY ALL TOUCH ASAI.
SIGN: FESTIVAL
祭
Tシャツ屋
光るTシャツ販売中
SIGNS: IN THE DARK THEY GLOW • ORIGINAL T-SHIRTS / T-SHIRT ROOM / GLOWING T-SHIRTS ON SALE / IN THE DARK AND GLOOM THEY GLOW

HE SEEMS HARMLESS, SO THEY FEEL FREE TO TOUCH.
...BUT WHAT WE NEED TO FIGURE OUT IS WHY ALL THE GIRLS TOUCH ASAI.
ASAI WAS SO HUNG UP ON EBISU, HE DIDN'T NOTICE...

POSTERS: SUCHADA REVUE LIVE CONCERT / THEATER!
I DON'T WANT THAT POWER!
HE'S SO UNPOPULAR, NOBODY'S ON THEIR GUARD WITH HIM. IT'S AN UNPOPULAR SUPERPOWER.
LIKE A STATUE BY THE SIDE OF THE ROAD THAT'S WORN DOWN FROM EVERYONE TOUCHING IT.

SIGNS: OYA HIGH 58TH

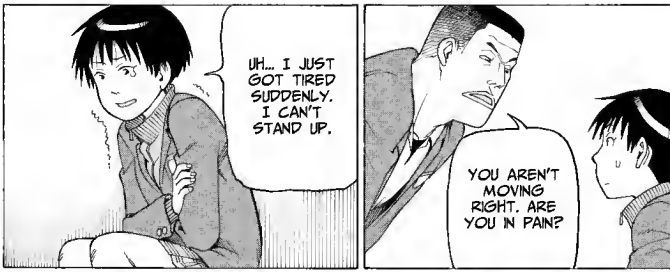


SIGNS: CONCERT / CURRY / TEA CEREMONY CLUB OPEN AIR / HOME EC CLUB C+ LEVEL GOURMET

WHY ARE YOU JUST SITTING THERE?
Y-YEAH.
LEAV-ING? BYE!

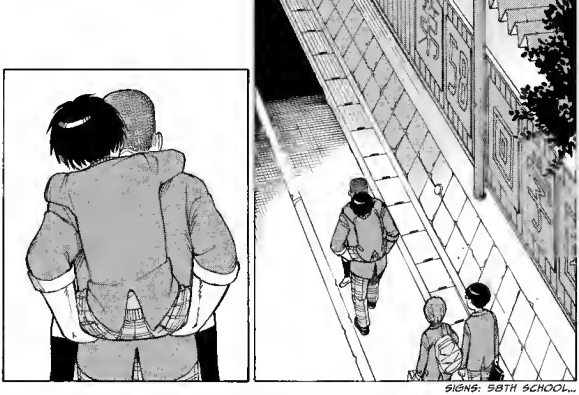
OH...? A BOYFRIEND?
WAITING FOR A FRIEND.
OH...

WERE YOU CRYING?


UH... I JUST GOT TIRED SUDDENLY. I CAN'T STAND UP.
YOU AREN'T MOVING RIGHT. ARE YOU IN PAIN?

JUST THINK OF ME AS AN OBJECT.
I'LL BE BETTER IN A BIT. I'LL CALL A CAB.
THAT'S NOT GOOD.
YOU WERE WORKING OUTSIDE ALL DAY. MAYBE THE COLD GOT TO YOU.

MY OVERBUILT MUSCLES... IF I DON'T USE THEM NOW, WHEN WILL I?
EH...?! I'M FINE!
TODAY, I'M A STRETCHER!
I'LL GET YOU TO THE MAIN ROAD.


SIGNS: 58TH SCHOOL...

WHAT'S THIS?
HE'S BEING PRETTY COOL FOR AN UNPOPULAR BROTHER.

HEH.
HE SEEMS SO BIG, SUDDENLY.
HE WAS ALWAYS BIG.
RIGHT...

SHE WHISPERED SOMETHING IN ASAI'S EAR.
TODAY...
AND EBISU...
BUT AT THAT TIME, EVERY NERVE AND CELL IN ASAI'S BODY...
...WAS FOCUSED ON HIS BACK.
HE DIDN'T HEAR...
...A THING.

CHAPTER 101 / END

CHAPTER 102
ABANDONED VILLAGE

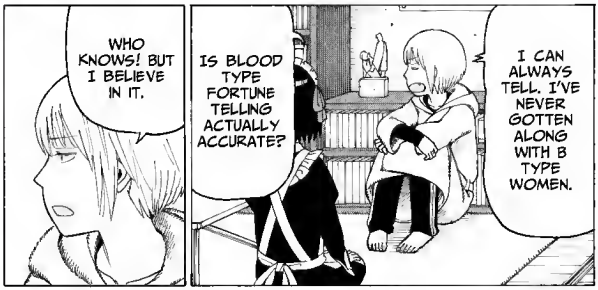
SIGN: CAFÉ GOURD

I REALLY HATE THE WAY YOU SAY THE SAME THING TWICE IN A ROW LIKE THAT.
LIKE SOME STUPID STUDENT PRETENDING TO BE A CELEBRITY.
WELL, EXCUSE ME FOR LIVING.
SO, THESE GHOSTS ARE WHITE...
...AND THEY...
WAIT, WAIT.
DON'T DESCRIBE THE GHOSTS. IT'LL PUT IDEAS IN MY HEAD.
WHERE IS THIS PLACE?
SO YOU ARE GOING TO COVER IT?
NEED A GUIDE?
NO.
HAVING A GUIDE ISN'T REAL ENOUGH. AND I'M TAKING MY ASSISTANT.
OH.
THAT HIGH SCHOOL GIRL.

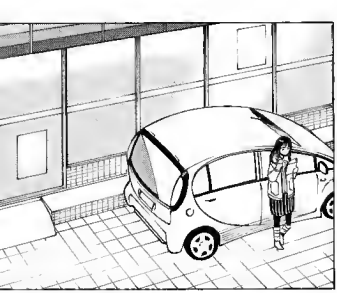
BUILDING: KAWAI APARTMENTS
DID...
...YOU...
...SAY...
...GHOST TOWN?!
NOPE!!
I SAID HOE-DOWN.
MOMMYYY, OPEN THE DOOR!
WAAAH, LET ME IN!

THIS IS AMAZING!
I'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO EXPLORE A GHOST TOWN!
WHEN?
FIRST, I'LL TELL SHIZUKA-NEECHAN YOU'RE COMING.
EH?
YOU MEAN THE ANTIQUE SHOP LADY?
YES. SHE'LL BE THE ONE DRIVING.
UGH. I DON'T KNOW ABOUT HER...
YOU DON'T...
HOW IS SHE DIFFERENT FROM ME?
SHE'S NOTHING LIKE YOU.
SHE'S GOT LAYERS. MYSTERIES.
SHE RUNS THE ANTIQUE STORE, BUT WHAT ELSE?
SHE'S A CHIMERA.

YOU'RE O.
RIGHT!
I DUNNO HER BLOOD TYPE.
IS SHE?
AND SHE'S TYPE B!


WHO KNOWS! BUT I BELIEVE IN IT.
IS BLOOD TYPE FORTUNE TELLING ACTUALLY ACCURATE?
I CAN ALWAYS TELL. I'VE NEVER GOTTEN ALONG WITH B TYPE WOMEN.

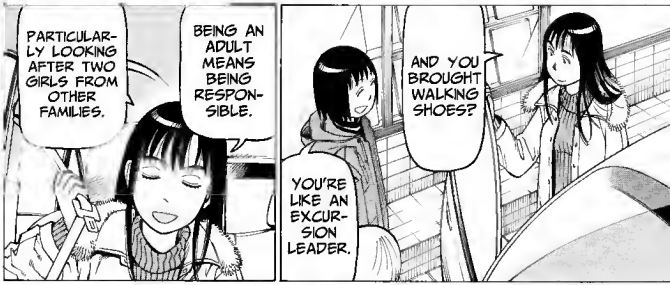
I ATE AT!
(TRYING TO SAY "I HATE THAT" WITH CLENCHED TEETH)
OKAY, OKAY.
"THE SMELL OF THE SUN IN FUTONS ON THE LINE IS THE SMELL OF DEAD DUST MITES."
"THE 'HEART' IS JUST ELECTRIC IMPULSES IN THE BRAIN."
"THERE ARE NO GHOSTS BECAUSE PEOPLE CEASE TO EXIST WHEN THEY DIE."
THEY ALL THINK LIKE THAT.



SIGN: WINTER MEAT FAIR

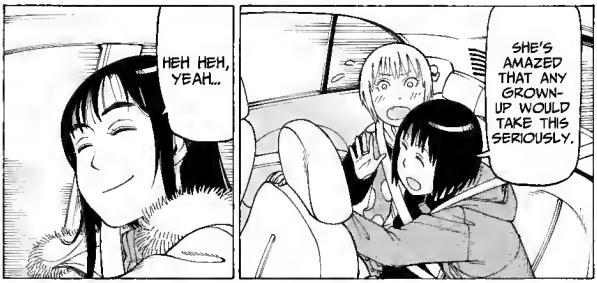
SIGN: 11-SEVEN CONVENIENCE

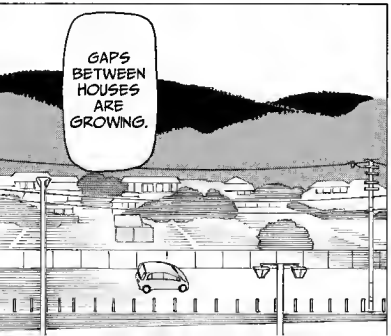
YOU'RE BOTH DRESSED WARMLY, RIGHT?
IT GETS COLD IN THOSE MOUNTAINS.
HI.
NICE TO MEET YOU.
UM.
SURE.

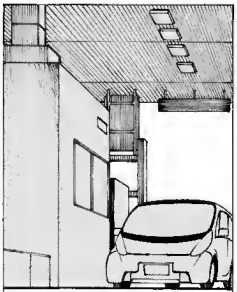

PARTICULARLY LOOKING AFTER TWO GIRLS FROM OTHER FAMILIES.
BEING AN ADULT MEANS BEING RESPONSIBLE.
YOU'RE LIKE AN EXCURSION LEADER.
AND YOU BROUGHT WALKING SHOES?

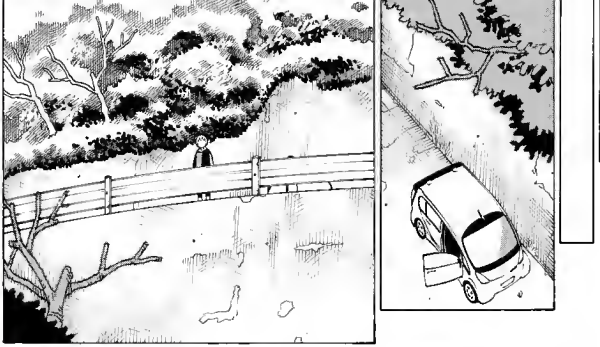
WE'LL EAT DINNER THERE, TOO.
I'VE MADE A RESERVATION AT AN INN NEAR SUSABI VILLAGE.

WE'LL GO CHECK OUT THE VILLAGE ONCE IT GETS DARK.
:WHISPER:
HM? WHAT?


SHE'S AMAZED THAT ANY GROWN-UP WOULD TAKE THIS SERIOUSLY.
HEH HEH, YEAH...

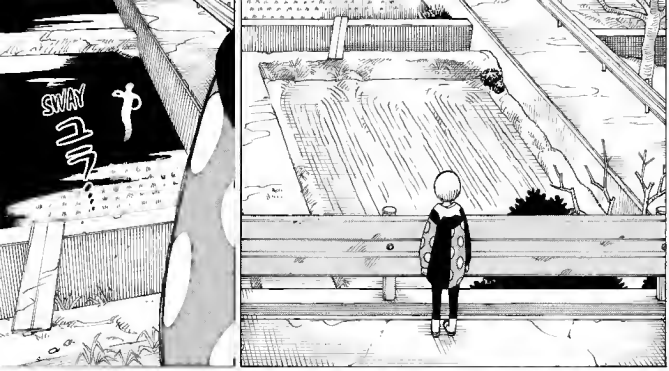

GAPS BETWEEN HOUSES ARE GROWING.



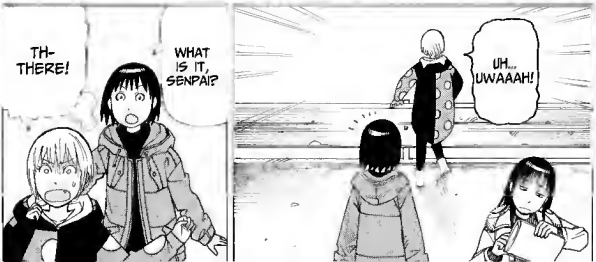


WE SHOULD BE ALMOST THERE.
WE CAME HERE, TURNED THERE...

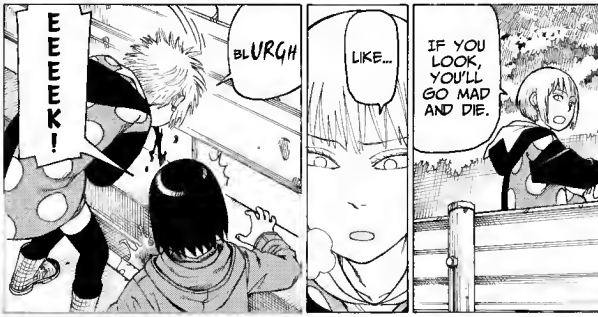
WHEN IT WAS JUST YOU, I PLANNED TO PUT YOU ON THE BACK OF MY MOTOR-CYCLE.
GLAD WE BROUGHT THE CAR.

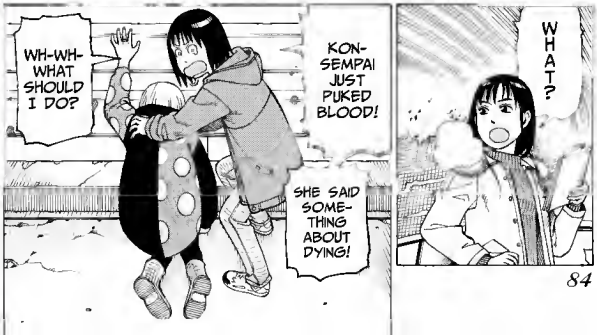

SWAY
ユラ

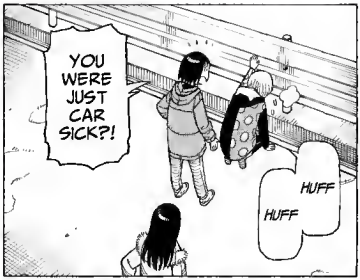
SQUIRM
くね…
SQUIRM
くね…
SQUIRM
くね…

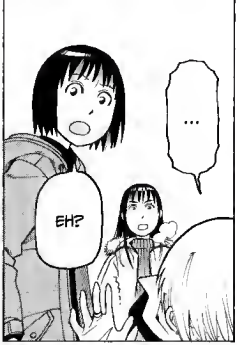

TH-
THERE!
WHAT
IS IT,
SENPAI?
UH...
UWAAAH!

A SQUIRMY THING?
LIKE A LONG BUG? GROSS!
NO...
A MONSTER, LIKE A SCARE-CROW DANCING IN THE FIELD!
DON'T LOOK.

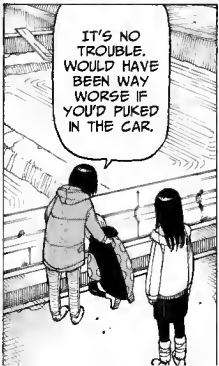

IF YOU LOOK, YOU'LL GO MAD AND DIE.
LIKE...
BLURGH
EEEEK!

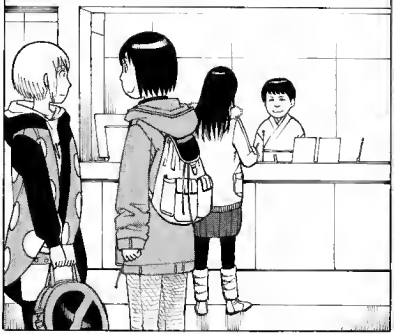

WHAT?
KON-SEMPAI JUST PUKED BLOOD!
WH-WH-WHAT SHOULD I DO?
SHE SAID SOME-THING ABOUT DYING!

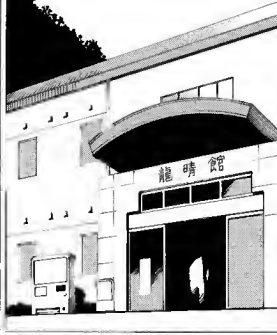




BOTTLE: TOMATO - WITH LYCOPENE!






龍晴館

DO YOU KNOW WHERE THE VILLAGE IS?
ゴボ" ボ" GLUG GLUG

WHEW, I'M BUSHED!
THANKS FOR DRIVING!

THAT'S THE WAY THE SQUIRMY THING WAS...

SOUNDS LIKE WE GO HERE, AND THEN IN HERE.
THIS IS WHERE FUTABA-CHAN THREW UP.
THIS IS WHERE WE STOPPED THE CAR.

CURTAINS: WOMEN, MEN
女
男
I DIDN'T SEE THE, UH... SQUIG-GLER?
WRIG-GLER?
SQUI-RMER!
I FEEL LIKE IT WAS REAL...
...BUT I HAD A BAD HEADACHE FROM THE MOTION SICKNESS.
I MIGHT HAVE IMAG-INED IT.
SUCH A LUXURY BEING IN THE BATH WITH THE SUN STILL UP!
AND HAVING YOUNGER GIRLS BATHING WITH ME IS GOOD FOR MY SKIN.
IT'S SO GLOSSY!
THAT'S THE HOT SPRING MINERALS!

HEY, SHOW ME A REAL HIGH SCHOOL GIRL BATHING SCENE.
YOU KNOW, "SENPAI, YOU'VE GOT SUCH BIG BREASTS, EEEK, EEEK."
SHE DOESN'T HAVE BIG BREASTS, SO WE CAN'T.
OH.
SORRY.
JEEZ, SHIZUKA-NEECHAN! YOU'VE GOT NO DELIVERY!
THAT'S DELI-CACY!
YOU SHOULD CHECK TO SEE IF SOMEONE'S FLAT-CHESTED BEFORE PICKING YOUR WORDS.
DO YOU WANT TO GET PUNCHED?!
THEY'RE HAVING A REAL BATHING SCENE NEXT DOOR.
効能
・疲れ・肩
・疲労・筋
・体力回復
SIGN: GOOD FOR SHOULDER FATIGUE, MUSCLE EXHAUSTION, PHYSICAL RECOVERY

BLUB
BLUB
ぐつ
ぐつ
ぐつ
BLUB
335
WHOOPS! DID I SAVE IT?
YOUR SLEEVES! IN THE BOWL!
HEY!
OOOH. HEH HEH HEH.
BLUB
BLUB
ぐつ
YOU SOUND LIKE OUR MOM, HOTORI.
MM... NOT A FAN.
DON'T YOU LIKE 'EM?
SENPAI, YOU AREN'T EATING YOUR CHESTNUTS.
INFANTILE

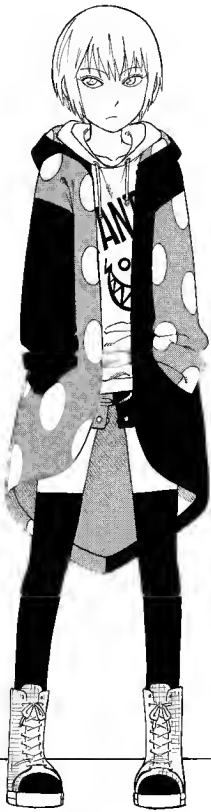
AHHHH... TOOK A BATH, ATE SOME FOOD...
TIME TO SLEEP.
EH?!

I'M JOKING! JACKSON. JORDON. KORS.
WHAT?
LIST OF MICHAELS.

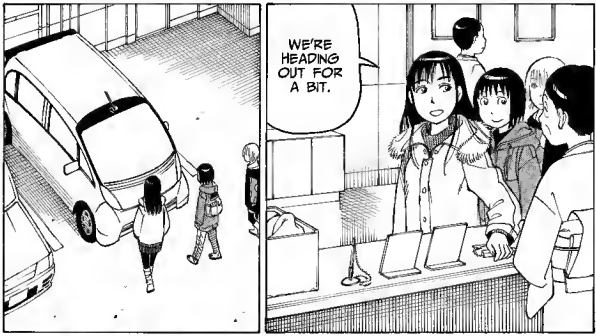
AS-SUMING WE'LL GET A BIT LOST...
...IT SHOULD BE A THIRTY MINUTE DRIVE, THEN AN HOUR WALK TO THE VILLAGE.
WE'LL LEAVE AT TEN.
PERFECT TIME TO EXPLORE, RIGHT?

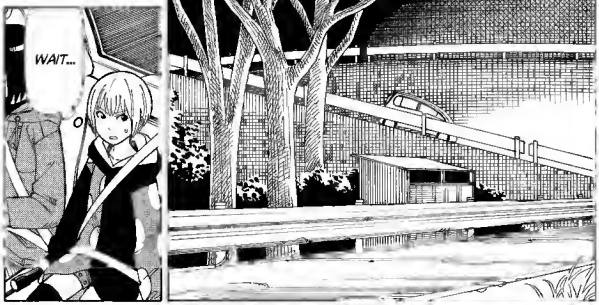
SWISH
SNNNN
NOD... NOD...
ZIP
ALL RIGHT, GIRLS!
LET'S GO! TO SUSABI VILLAGE!

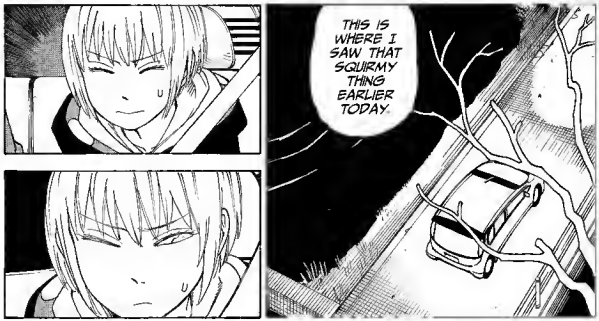
CHAPTER 108 ABANDONED VILLAGE (2)



BUILDING: RYUUSEIKAN



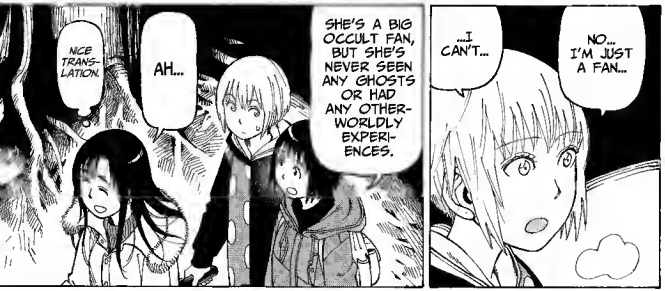

WAIT...
OI


THIS IS WHERE I SAW THAT SQUIRMY THING EARLIER TODAY.

NO, I'M FINE.
FUTABA CHAN, ARE YOU DRUNK?
WHEW.

OKAY... WE CAN PARK HERE...
NO WAY.
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
ARE YOU DRUNK, SEN-PAI?
AREN'T WE GONNA GET LOST IN THIS PLACE?
I THINK WE CAN GET IN THROUGH HERE.
WORSE COMES TO WORST, WE CAN ASK THE LOCALS.
IF WE DON'T FIND IT BEFORE DAWN, WE'LL HEAD BACK.
WE HAVE PLENTY OF OTHER OPTIONS.
DON'T WANT TO GET OUR-SELVES STRANDED BY OVER-STAYING OUR WELCOME.
IF IT LOOKS DANGER-OUS, WE'LL TURN BACK.

THE RUMORS SAY THAT THERE'S A GHOST, RIGHT?
YEAH... WELL, IT'S JUST A RUMOR.
EVERY PLACE HAS ITS GHOST STORIES.
CAN YOU SEE GHOSTS, FUTABA-CHAN?
HUH?


NO... I'M JUST A FAN...
...I CAN'T...
SHE'S A BIG OCCULT FAN, BUT SHE'S NEVER SEEN ANY GHOSTS OR HAD ANY OTHER-WORLDLY EXPERI-ENCES.
AH...
NICE TRANS-LATION.

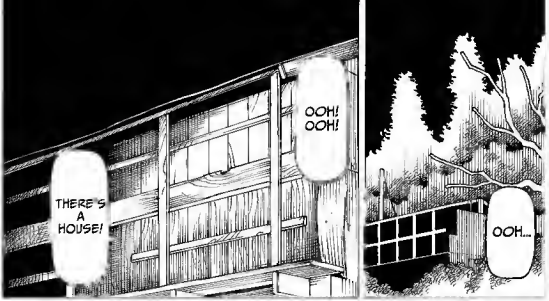
I'D LOVE TO MEET A GHOST, IF THEY REALLY EXIST...
BIG IF.

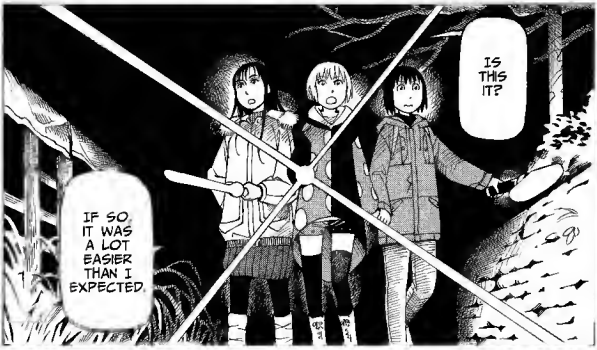
AH-CHOO!
OH? I CAN NO LONGER FEEL COLD...
...SO WHY WOULD I SNEEZE?
I BET SOME BABE WAS TALKING ABOUT ME.
COFFEE

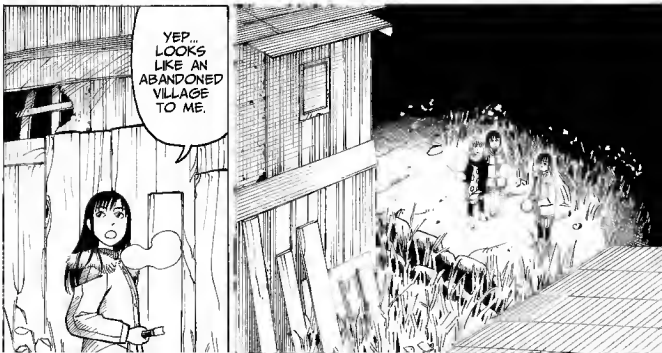
AN ABANDONED VILLAGE?!
IT'S FREEZING OUT THERE...
...AND THEY'RE STAYING THE NIGHT IN THAT PLACE?!

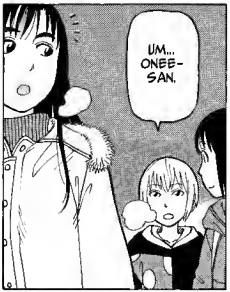
HUH...
HOTORI-CHAN'S CURIOSITY CAN GET THE BETTER OF HER SOME-TIMES.
IT DOESN'T SEEM SAFE FOR A BUNCH OF GIRLS...
...TO TRAVEL ALONE.
CRACK-
パキン

...SPLIT IN HALF!!
...?! MY GLASS...
...FOOL.
IT'S SUCH A CLEAN SPLIT. MUST BE A GOOD OMEN.
IT'S A BAD OMEN.


OOH! OOH!
THERE'S A HOUSE!
OOH...

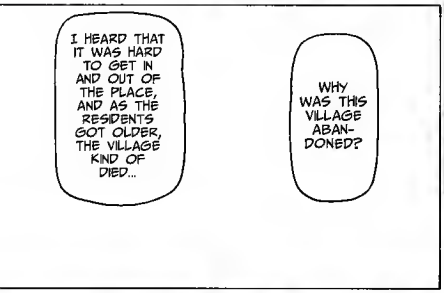

IS THIS IT?
IF SO, IT WAS A LOT EASIER THAN I EXPECTED.


YEP... LOOKS LIKE AN ABANDONED VILLAGE TO ME.


UM... ONEE-SAN.

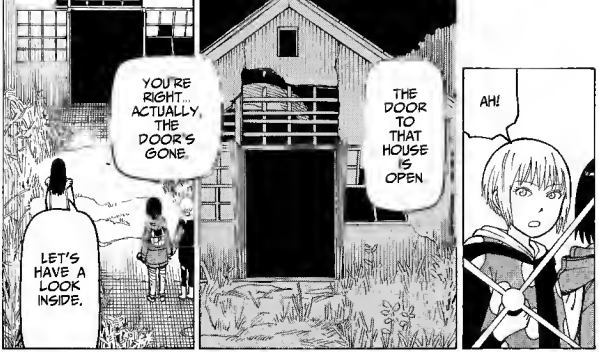
DOOR'S STILL LOCKED, HUH?
HEY! STOP IT...

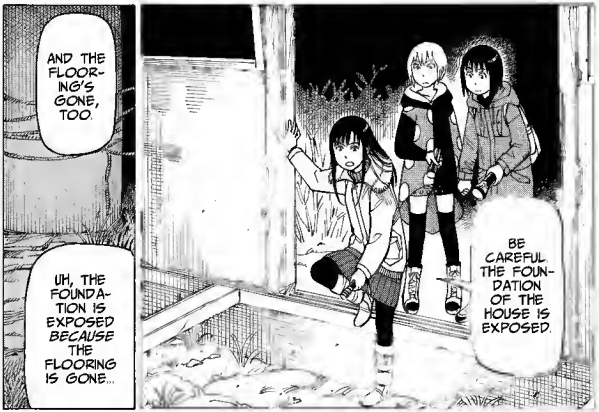
THIS PLACE. WHY WAS...
YES? YES?


I HEARD THAT IT WAS HARD TO GET IN AND OUT OF THE PLACE, AND AS THE RESIDENTS GOT OLDER, THE VILLAGE KIND OF DIED...
WHY WAS THIS VILLAGE ABAN-DONED?

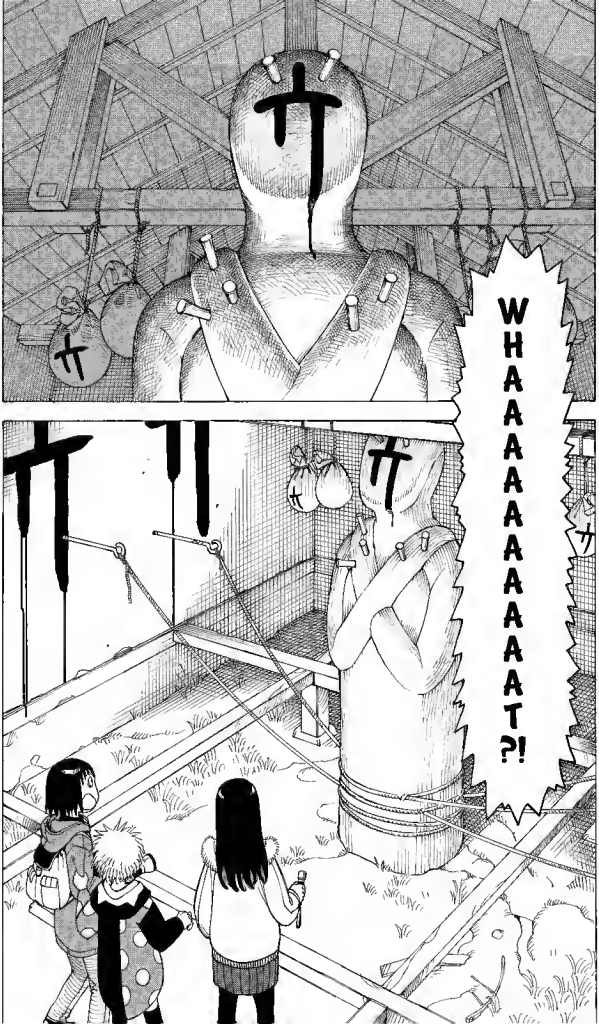
STILL... SOME-THING DOESN'T SEEM RIGHT...

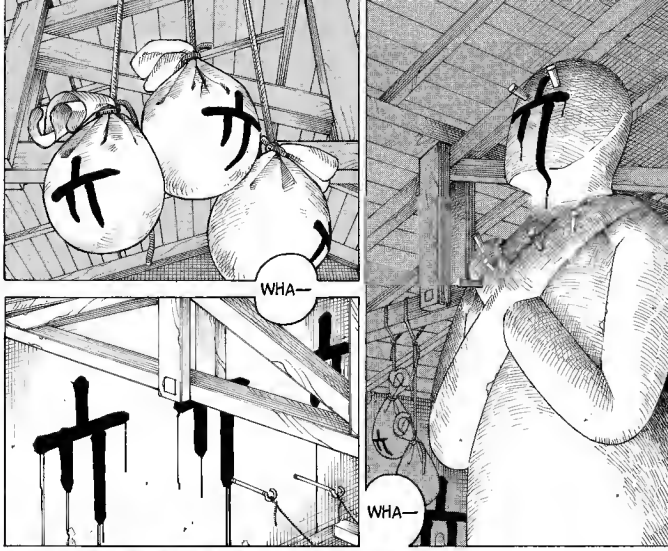
IT'S SAD TO SEE A PLACE WHERE PEOPLE USED TO LIVE...
..LEFT COM-PLETELY EMPTY.


LET'S HAVE A LOOK INSIDE.
YOU'RE RIGHT... ACTUALLY, THE DOOR'S GONE.
THE DOOR TO THAT HOUSE IS OPEN.
AH!


AND THE FLOORING'S GONE, TOO.
UH, THE FOUNDATION IS EXPOSED BECAUSE THE FLOORING IS GONE...
BE CAREFUL THE FOUNDATION OF THE HOUSE IS EXPOSED.

HUH?


WHAAAAAAAAAAT?!


WHA—
WHA—

BAD!
BAD...!
THIS IS VERY BAD!
WHAT IS THIS...?

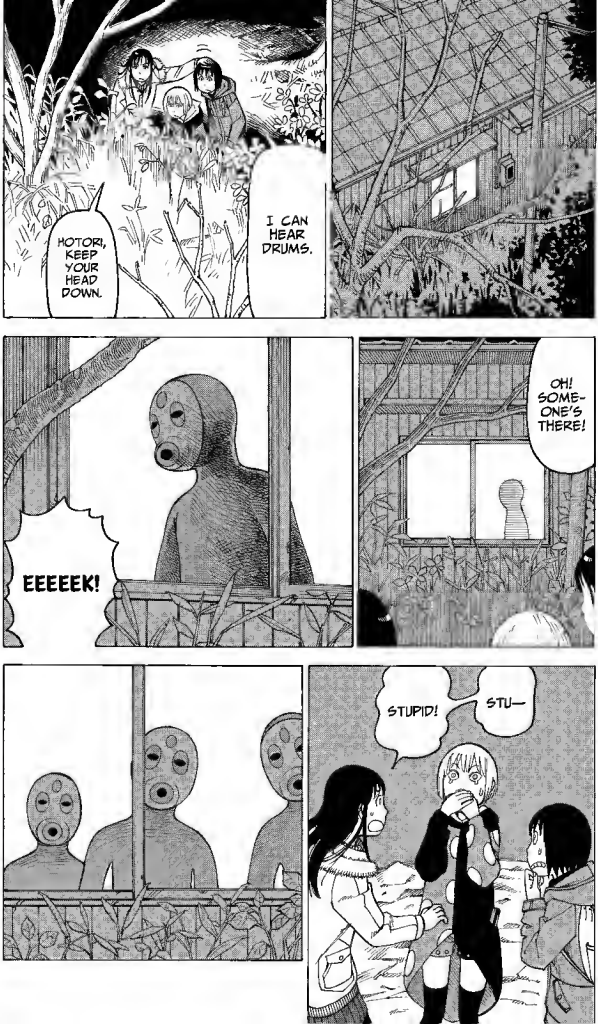
JUMP びくっ
パン
SLAP
LOOKS LIKE IT'S MADE OUT OF WOOD...
MUST HAVE TAKEN A LOT OF EFFORT...
WHA... WHA... WHAT IS THIS...?
...NO IDEA.
SENPAI SAYS YOU SHOULDN'T TOUCH IT. IT'S A WICKER.
A...
...WICKER?
WICKER MAN.
※USED BY DRUIDS FOR HUMAN SACRIFICE RITUALS.

WHAT'S GOING ON...?
THIS IS STRANGE.
VERY STRANGE.

I WANT TO LOOK AROUND THE VILLAGE SOME MORE. IS THAT OKAY?
Y-YES.
WHAT?!
AREN'T YOU SCARED, SENPAI?!
...HEH. SOUNDS LIKE FUN TO ME.

HEY, WAY TO BE A WOMAN!
HOW ABOUT YOU OPEN YOUR EYES?

HOTORI, DOES THIS VILLAGE SEEM STRANGE TO YOU?
THAT'S WHAT I'VE BEEN TRYNG TO TELL YOU!! THIS PLACE IS VERY STRANGE!
THUD
ゴチ
THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEAN...
LET'S GET A LITTLE CLOSER.
HUH? WHY?! WASN'T THE VILLAGE ABAN-DONED?
THE LIGHTS ARE ON IN THAT HOUSE.


HOTORI, KEEP YOUR HEAD DOWN.
I CAN HEAR DRUMS.
EEEEEK!
OH! SOME-ONE'S THERE!
STUPID!
STU—

THEY SAW US! RUN!
WAH! STAND UP, SENPAI!
RUN, FUTABA-CHAN!
COME WITH US, NEE-CHAN!! YOU SAID WE'D TURN BACK IF IT LOOKED DANGER-OUS!

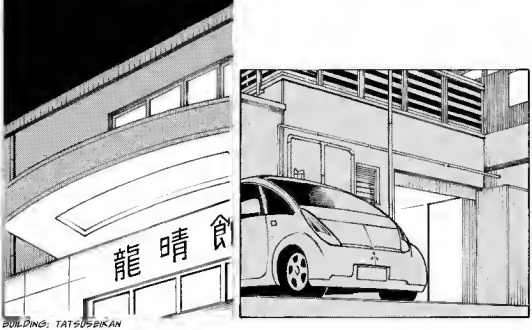
WAH!
WAH!
WAHHH!
WOOOO…
GYAH!! SOME-THING'S CHASING US!!
WOOO…
WOOO…
WHAT IS THAT?!
WHAT IS THAT?!
WHAT IS THAT?!
WHAT IS THAT?!

IT STOPPED... CHASING US... A WHILE AGO... BUT YOU GIRLS WOULDN'T... STOP...
GASP... WHEEZE... GASP...
IT'S NOT... CHASING US ANY-MORE?

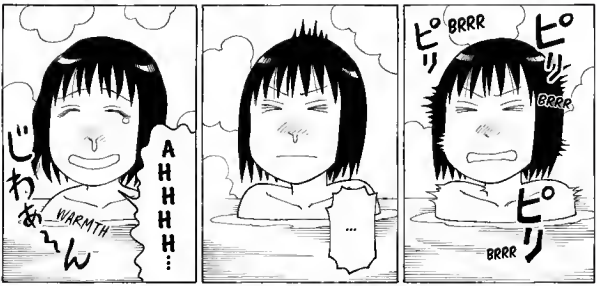
SOME-THING VERY STRANGE WAS OUT THERRR
RRR...
—AH!
SENPAI, PUT ON YOUR SEAT-BELT!
I SAW SOME-THING!
WHAT WAS THAT?!
YES! SOME-THING OUT THERE!

WHAT...
...HAPPENED TO THAT VILLAGE ...?
THIS IS GETTING INTER-ESTING.
IN ANY CASE, THERE'S SOME FUNNY BUSINESS GOING ON HERE.

CHAPTER 108
ABANDONED VILLAGE (3)



BUILDING: TATSUSEIKAN

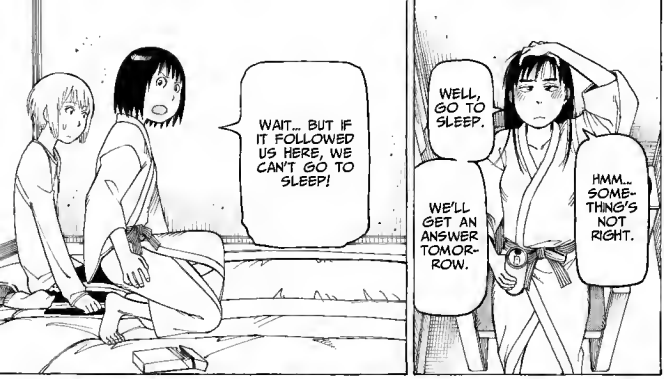


...I'VE ALWAYS LOOKED FOR SOMETHING THAT WOULD DEFY ALL REASON.
BUT...
NO IDEA IF IT WAS A MONSTER OR AN ALIEN.
THAT WAS AN INCREDIBLE EXPERI-ENCE.
WE WENT DOWN JUST TO POKE AROUND...
...SO ALL WE GOT WAS A LITTLE SCARE.
I'M NOT SAYING THAT I DON'T BELIEVE IN THE OCCULT, BUT AT THE END OF THE DAY, I ONLY BELIEVE IN WHAT'S REAL.
THE REASON GHOST STORIES POP UP IS BECAUSE PEOPLE TEND TO STOP THERE.
WAIT...
THEIR PROBLEM IS FAKES.
FANS OF THE OCCULT DON'T NEED TO FEAR NON-BELIEVERS.
WE HAVE TO VERIFY IF IT WAS A REAL GHOST OR A FAKE ONE.
NEXT TIME, WE'LL BE SEEKING ANSWERS.

SENPAI, AREN'T YOU GONNA WEAR A YUKATA?
NO.
ISN'T IT HARD TO SLEEP IN THAT STIFF THING?
CLACK
ガチャ
?!
...SEN-PAI?
バタン
SLAM

335
フシュ
FIZZ
さ〃ぼ
GLUG
ざぼ
GLUG
さ〃ぼ
GLUG
ENERGY DRINK
ENERGY
ジャク
CLENCH
AHHH-HHHH...
...GOOD STUFF.
SENPAI, HAVE A SNACK.
HEY, IT'S ALREADY 2:30. YOU'LL GET FAT.
SENPAI, WHAT'S WRONG?
YOU'VE BEEN ACTING FUNNY. WAS THAT TOO LONG OF A BATH?
UM...
MGH!

FRONT
BUT WHEN WE PASSED BY THE FRONT DESK ON THE WAY BACK FROM OUR BATH...
I MIGHT BE WRONG..
I MIGHT JUST BE SEEING THINGS...
...FROM THE VILLAGE...
WELL, I THINK I...
...SAW THAT GUY...
REMEMBER HOW YOU SAID YOU SAW SOMETHING SQUIRMY WHEN WE GOT HERE?
I-IT WAS JUST YOUR IMAGINATION...
...WHAT'S WITH THAT?



BESIDES, IT STOPPED CHASING US PRETTY QUICKLY, DESPITE THE FACT THAT IT HAD THE ADVANTAGE OF TERRAIN AND WAS UP AGAINST THREE GIRLS.
IF IT WANTED TO HURT US, IT WOULD HAVE MADE A MOVE ALREADY.
NAH, THERE'S NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT.

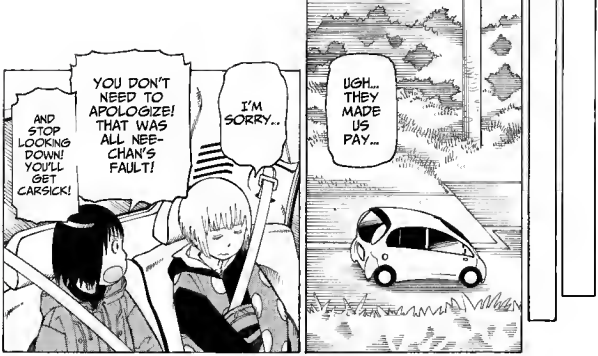
BOX: DRECONE
(A SILLY MASHUP OF REFERENCES TO SLEEPING AID DREWELL AND JAPANESE BAND DREAMS COME TRUE)

...
WE'LL BE GOING BACK INTO THE MOUNTAINS TOMORROW, SO GET PLENTY OF REST.
IF YOU REFUSE TO GO TO SLEEP, I'LL GIVE YOU SLEEPING PILLS.

龍晴館

TUG
PHIME OO PHAY UH.
(TIME TO WAKE UP.)
PHI-PHUA-EEHAN...
(SHIZUKA-NEECHAN...)
I WAS JUST AT YOUR HOUSE...

RIP
バリバリ
TEAR
GYAAAAH!!
GULP
ゴク
!!!
AH...
ACK! HACK! COUGH!
WE'LL HAVE TO PAY FOR THAT...
WHAT WAS THAT FOR, NEE-CHAN?!

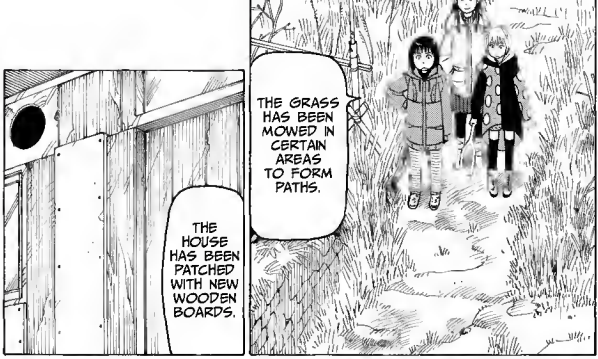

UGH... THEY MADE US PAY...
I'M SORRY...
YOU DON'T NEED TO APOLOGIZE! THAT WAS ALL NEE-CHAN'S FAULT!
AND STOP LOOKING DOWN! YOU'LL GET CARSICK!

SO, WHAT IS THIS THING?
CAN YOU EXPLAIN IT TO US?
I WENT DOWN TO THE FRONT DESK THIS MORNING, WHILE YOU GIRLS WERE STILL ASLEEP.
I ASKED IF ANY MASKS HAD BEEN TURNED IN, SINCE I'D LOST ONE.
AND HE GAVE ME THAT.

BOX: LOST AND FOUND

I'M GUESSING THAT'S WHAT FUTABA-CHAN SAW BEHIND THE FRONT DESK LAST NIGHT.
THE WEIRDOS IN THE VILLAGE WERE WEARING THESE MASKS.

THEY'RE HUMAN.
YES... WE'RE NOT DEALING WITH MONSTERS OR ALIENS.
THIS MASK WAS HANDMADE, RIGHT?
BUT NO SUCH LUCK.
...THEN SOMETHING SUPER-NATURAL WOULD BE GOING ON.
IF THE VILLAGE WE SAW YESTERDAY HAD DISAP-PEARED NOW...
OKAY.
THIS VILLAGE ISN'T ABAN-DONED.
YUP.
IT'S A LOT BRIGHTER NOW, SO HAVE YOU NOTICED ANYTHING?


THE GRASS HAS BEEN MOWED IN CERTAIN AREAS TO FORM PATHS.
THE HOUSE HAS BEEN PATCHED WITH NEW WOODEN BOARDS.

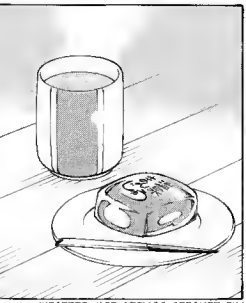
BUT, UNLIKE ABAN-DONED BUILD-INGS...
...THERE'S NO BROKEN GLASS ON THE GROUND...
...OR ANYTHING ELSE DANGER-OUS.
THE WINDOWS ARE MISSING GLASS PANELS.

THIS MUST NOT BE SUSABI VILLAGE!
SO...
YEP, YEP.
OH...

NO... THIS IS SUSABI VILLAGE.
I CAN ASSURE YOU OF THAT.
THIS IS THE ABANDONED VILLAGE I'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO SEE.
SO, LET'S GO SEE WHAT THIS VILLAGE IS REALLY ABOUT.
NEE-CHAN, DO YOU ALREADY KNOW THE ANSWER?
I MIGHT.
BUT, FIRST!
THAT THING'S STILL CREEPY, EVEN IN BROAD DAYLIGHT.

THIS IS THE HOUSE WHERE WE SAW THOSE WEIRDOS.
LET'S CIRCLE AROUND TO THE FRONT.
I CAN HEAR DRUMS... THAT MEANS THEY'RE STILL AROUND.
BANG
トン
BA-BAM
タ
タ
BANG
タン
IT'LL BE FINE...
.....
.....
SLIDE
ガラララ
HELLO...
OH?
BANG
ドトタン
BAM
BANG
トンタン♪
BAM

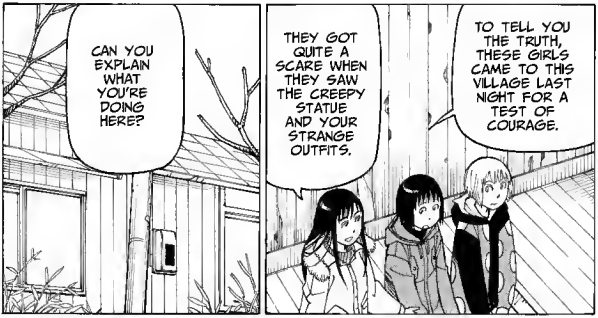
ER... WHO MIGHT YOU BE?
TUG


WRAPPER: HOT SPRINGS STEAMED BUN

KEEP PRACTIC-ING.

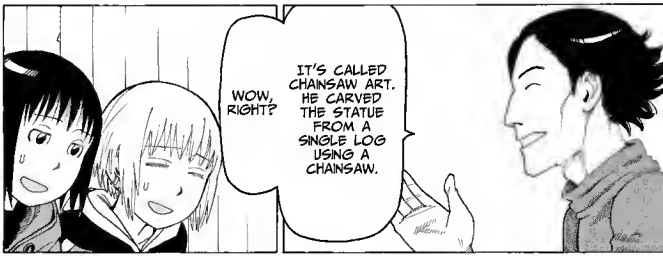
A.A.A.
WHERE DID YOU FIND IT?
YES, ONE OF OUR MEMBERS LOST THIS.
THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

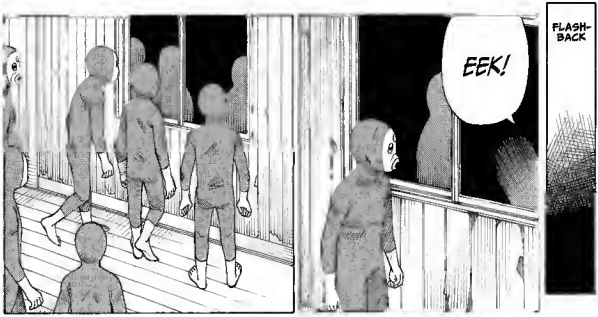
THE HOT-SPRING HOTEL TATSUSEI-KAN.
AH!
RIGHT, RIGHT, RIGHT!
WE TAKE BATHS THERE ALL THE TIME. THANK YOU FOR RETURNING IT TO US.

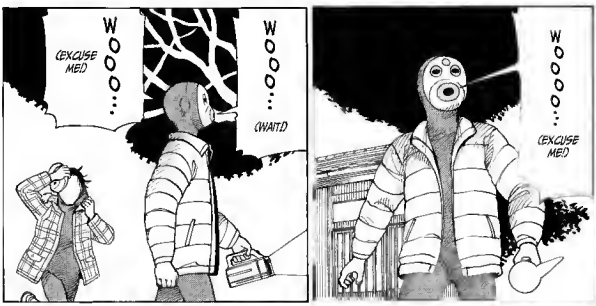

TO TELL YOU THE TRUTH, THESE GIRLS CAME TO THIS VILLAGE LAST NIGHT FOR A TEST OF COURAGE.
THEY GOT QUITE A SCARE WHEN THEY SAW THE CREEPY STATUE AND YOUR STRANGE OUTFITS.
CAN YOU EXPLAIN WHAT YOU'RE DOING HERE?

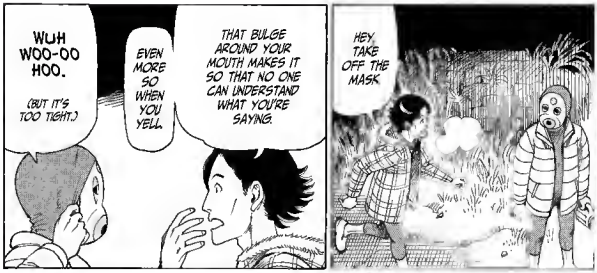
OH, ARE YOU THE ONES WHO RAN AWAY LAST NIGHT?
HANG ON A MOMENT.
HERE YOU ARE.
THIS IS WHO WE ARE.

KOUFUKU-ZA...?
SUGITACHI COLLEGE OF ARTS DRAMA CLUB...
Koufukuza
SUGITA COLLEG OF ARTS DRAMA CLUB
WE PARTICIPATE IN A LOT OF UNDER-GROUND PERFOR-MANCES.
OUR ACTING IS VERY AVANT-GARDE, AND WE'VE BEEN INTERVIEWED BY VARIOUS MAGAZINES.
THIS VILLAGE WAS ABANDONED A WHILE AGO...
..BUT WOULDN'T YOU AGREE THAT AN ABANDONED VILLAGE IS A WORK OF ART?
WE WANTED TO PRE-SERVE THE VILLAGE...
..SO OUR COLLEGE REPAIRED THE PLACE AND STARTED USING IT.
WE RECEIVED PERMISSION FROM THE GOVERN-MENT, NATURALLY.
AS FOR THE STATUE, IT WAS SOME ALUMNUS'S GRADUATION PROJECT.

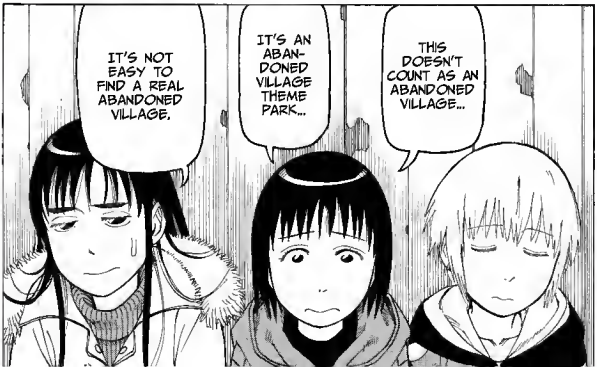

WOW, RIGHT?
IT'S CALLED CHAINSAW ART. HE CARVED THE STATUE FROM A SINGLE LOG USING A CHAINSAW.

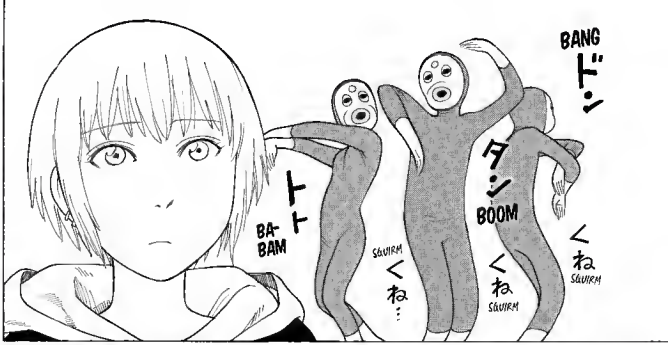

EEK!
FLASH-BACK

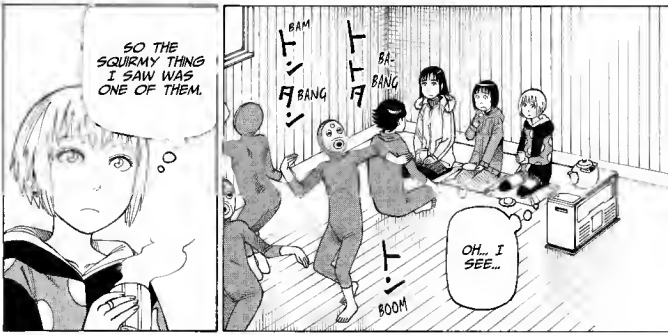

WOOO...
(EXCUSE ME)
WOOO...
(WAIT)
WOOO...
(EXCUSE ME)


WUH WOO-OO HOO.
(BUT IT'S TOO TIGHT.)
EVEN MORE SO WHEN YOU YELL.
THAT BULGE AROUND YOUR MOUTH MAKES IT SO THAT NO ONE CAN UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU'RE SAYING.
HEY. TAKE OFF THE MASK.

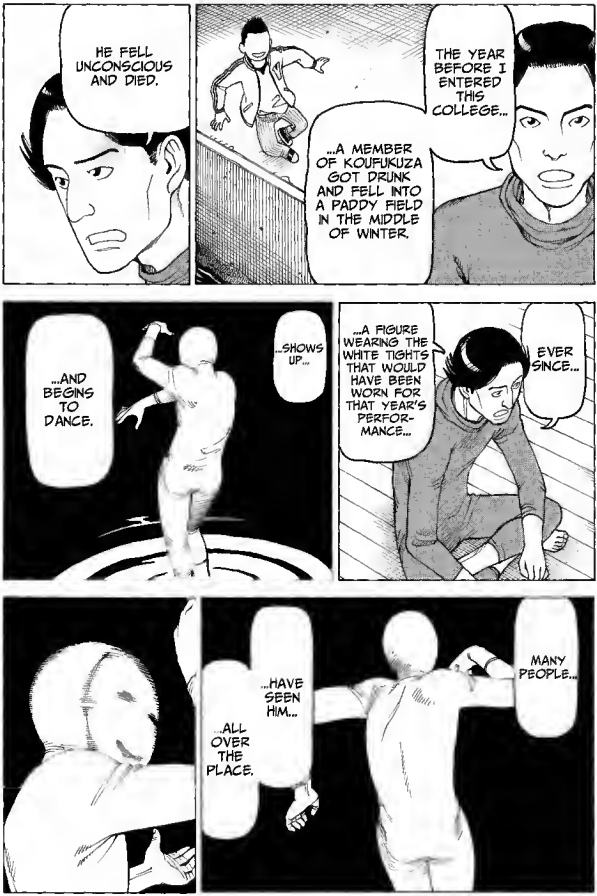
MAN, IT'S COLD...
LET'S GO BACK.
WELL, THEY WERE PROBABLY JUST HERE FOR A TEST OF COURAGE.

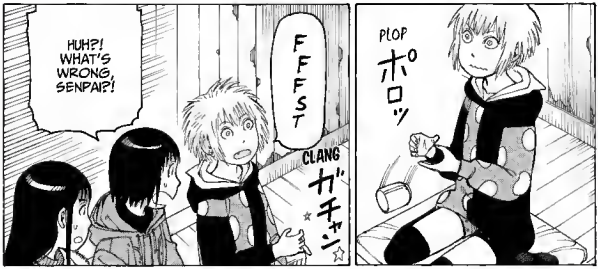

IT'S NOT EASY TO FIND A REAL ABANDONED VILLAGE.
IT'S AN ABAN-DONED VILLAGE THEME PARK...
THIS DOESN'T COUNT AS AN ABANDONED VILLAGE...

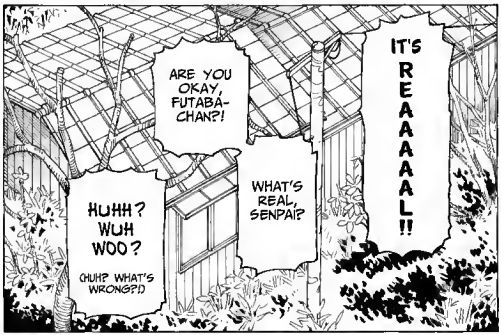

BANG
ドン
タン
BOOM
くね
SQUIRM
トト
BA-
BAM
SQUIRM
くね…
くね
SQUIRM


SO THE SQUIRMY THING I SAW WAS ONE OF THEM.
BAM
トン
タン
BANG
トトタ
BA-
BANG
トン
BOOM
OH... I SEE...

A LOT OF STUDENTS HAVE CLAIMED TO SEE A GHOST...
I JUST REMEMBERED! WHAT ABOUT THE GHOST STORIES? AREN'T THERE RUMORS ABOUT GHOSTS APPEARING?!

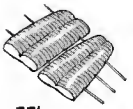

THE YEAR BEFORE I ENTERED THIS COLLEGE...
...A MEMBER OF KOUFUKUZA GOT DRUNK AND FELL INTO A PADDY FIELD IN THE MIDDLE OF WINTER.
HE FELL UNCONSCIOUS AND DIED.
EVER SINCE...
...A FIGURE WEARING THE WHITE TIGHTS THAT WOULD HAVE BEEN WORN FOR THAT YEAR'S PERFORMANCE...
...SHOWS UP...
...AND BEGINS TO DANCE.
MANY PEOPLE...
...HAVE SEEN HIM...
...ALL OVER THE PLACE.


PLOP
ポロッ
FFFST
CLANG
ガチャン
HUH?! WHAT'S WRONG, SENPAI?!


IT'S REAAAAAL!!
ARE YOU OKAY, FUTABA-CHAN?!
WHAT'S REAL, SENPAI?
HUHH? WUH WOO?
(HUH? WHAT'S WRONG?!)

SHIZU-NEECHAN'S FAVORITE FOODS

SAKE



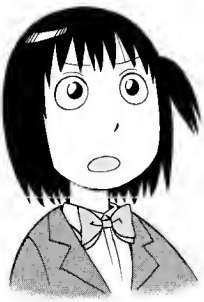
EEL

HIYAJIRU

EGGPLANT

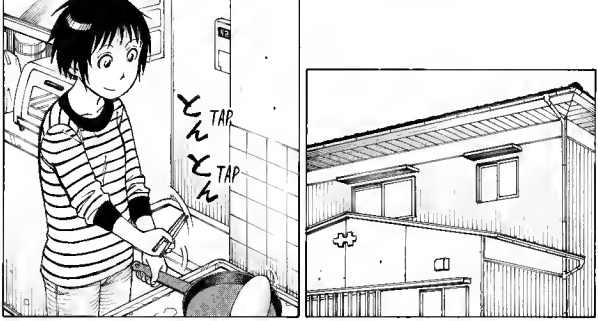
GRAPES

???



LIKE A GROWN-UP... MAN!

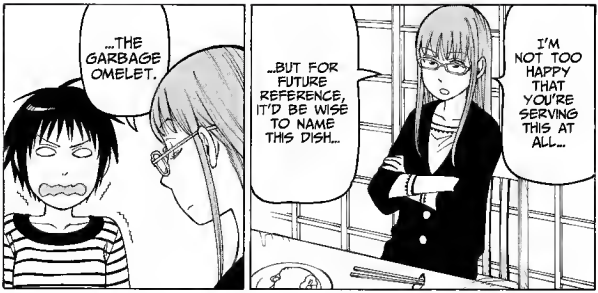
CHAPTER 110　GONE INTO THE DARKNESS

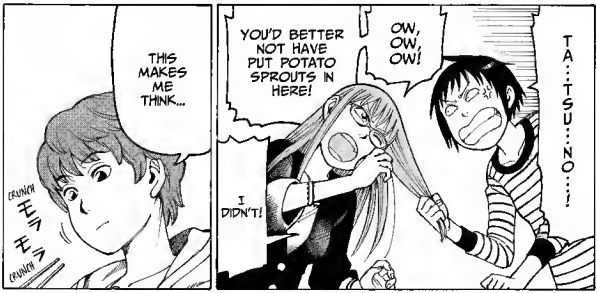

とんとん
TAP
TAP

THIS IS A NEW RECIPE I JUST CAME UP WITH.

HMM... YEAH...
もぐ... MUNCH
LET'S SEE.

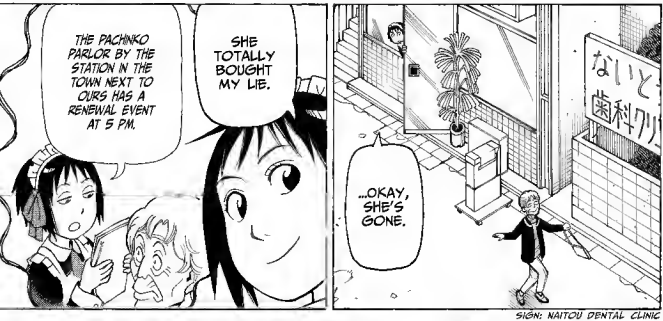
I PITY YOU.
THAT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH HOW IT TASTES!!
IT... IT'S GOO... IT'S GOO...
JUST STOP, SANADA-KUN. YOU'LL HURT YOURSELF.
IT DOESN'T TASTE BAD... BUT IT DOESN'T TASTE GOOD...
GEE, THANKS A LOT.
WELL, IT'S REALLY CRUNCHY FOR SOME REASON.
AND THE MORE I CHEW, THE WORSE IT GETS.
IT FEELS LIKE WE'RE EATING A BLACK HOLE OF UNDISCOVERED TASTES...
WHAT IS THIS?
AN OMELET MADE FROM MUSHROOM STEMS, CABBAGE CORES, CARROT TOPS, GREEN PEPPER STEMS...
...AND OTHER STUFF THAT'S USUALLY THROWN AWAY.
SO THAT'S WHY THEY'RE THROWN AWAY.
DON'T SPEAK IN UNISON!
AH!





BANNER: HAPPY

SIGN: COFFEE SEASIDE


SHE TOTALLY BOUGHT MY LIE.
THE PACHINKO PARLOR BY THE STATION IN THE TOWN NEXT TO OURS HAS A RENEWAL EVENT AT 5 P.M.
...OKAY, SHE'S GONE.
歯科クリ

SIGN: NAITOU DENTAL CLINIC

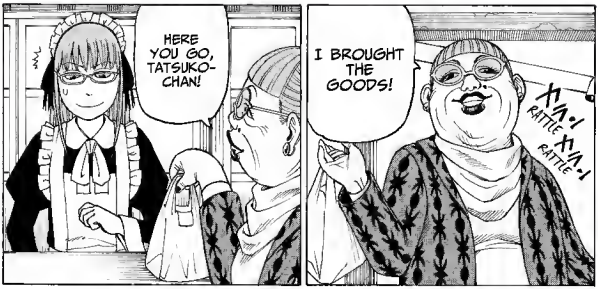
HELLO, MRS. HIRAYAMA? THE BIRTHDAY PARTY'S ON! BRING EVERY-THING NOW!
START GETTING TO WORK!
IF WE'RE LUCKY, SHE WON'T BE BACK FOR TWO HOURS.
WE'VE GOT 40 MINUTES, AT LEAST.

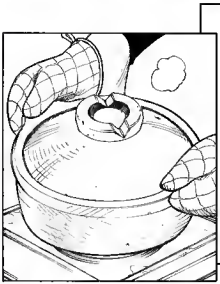
HOTORI, DID YOU BRING THE PORTABLE STOVE?
I'VE GOT IT COVERED. BROUGHT ONE FROM HOME.
BANG
BANG
BANG
BANG
HELLO, KIKUCHI-SAN? WE'RE GOOD. COME ON OVER!

シュー
SPRAAAY
GAS? WHAT?
TA-TSUN!
TA-TSUN!
WHAT?
WHAT?

GO GET THE GAS, THEN!!
NOD
コク
コク
NOD
YOU BROUGHT BUG SPRAY INSTEAD?

WELCOME.
I RAN RIGHT OVER.
GOOD EVENING.
I'M NOT DOING ANYTHING TO CHANGE MY NAME...
WHAT?! WHY IS IT ALWAYS BACK-WARDS?!
RIGHT THE FIRST TIME.
UMEKO-CHAN! I REMEMBERED THIS TIME!!
TOSHIKO-CHAN... NO, WAIT.
OH, YOU ACTUALLY GOT IT.
I HAVEN'T HEARD THAT INSULT BEFORE!
ARE YOU MAKING FUN OF HOW I GOT A BAD HAIR-CUT AND MY HEAD LOOKS LIKE A LANTERN NOW?
WHY DON'T YOU START CALLING YOURSELF UMEKO, UMEKO?
SHUT UP, YOU LANTERN CUT.

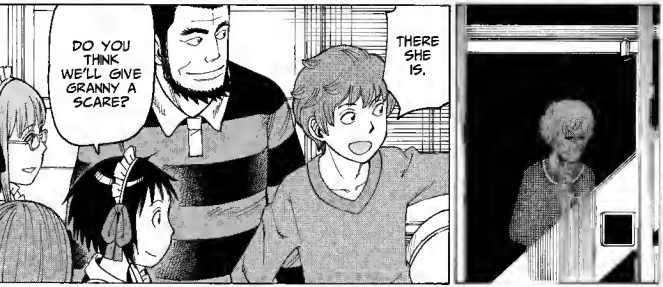

HERE YOU GO, TATSUKO-CHAN!
I BROUGHT THE GOODS!
RATTLE
RATTLE



DON'T GET SO MAD ABOUT IT...
OKAAAY, TATSUKO SPEAKING! CAN EVERY-ONE HOLD ON TO WHAT THEY BROUGHT FOR NOW?

OKAY, WE'RE GOOD TO GO. WITH TIME TO SPARE!
THE BROTH IS READY.
WE JUST HAVE TO WAIT FOR THE BIRTHDAY GIRL TO ARRIVE.

COFFEE
シーサイド


DO YOU THINK WE'LL GIVE GRANNY A SCARE?
THERE SHE IS.

AAAAH!
IS THAT LIAR STILL HERE?!

?!
HAPPY BIRTHDAY
WOW, SHE SCARED ME...
THIS IS...
OH, MY...
HAPPY BIRTH-DAY.
HAPPY BIRTHDAY, CHIEF MAID.
OH, DEAR. I COMPLETELY FORGOT...
IS THIS BIRTHDAY PARTY FOR ME?
WHAT?
NOW HAVE A SEAT.

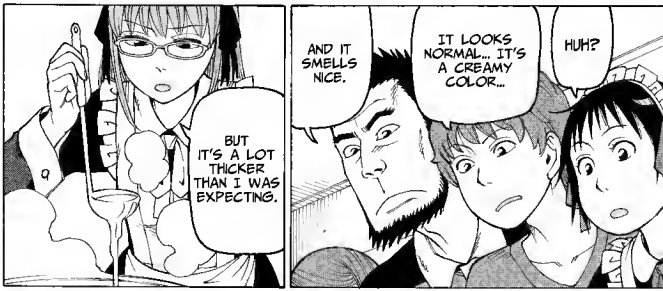
CLICK
チン
AND TO CELEBRATE YOUR BIRTHDAY...
?
MYS-TERY POT?!
...WE'RE HAVING A MYSTERY POT.
I DON'T SEE THE CONNEC-TION.
A MYSTERY POT INSTEAD OF A CAKE?
YOU DON'T LIKE SWEET STUFF, RIGHT? SO WE NEEDED SOMETHING INSTEAD OF A CAKE.

EVERYONE WILL USE THEIR OWN JUDGMENT WHEN DECIDING HOW LONG TO COOK THEIR OFFERING.
PLEASE BEGIN ADDING YOUR GOODS.
IT'S DARK, SO BE CARE-FUL.
I HAD TO CHOP MINE UP, SO I'LL GO FIRST.
ボチャ
PLOP
HEE HEE.
SPLASH
バシャ
HEH HEH HEH!
BDMP BDMP
ドキ ドキ
トプン
バチャ ボチャ

IT SHOULD BE DONE BY NOW.
THERE WAS A PARTY TO CELEBRATE YOUR RELEASE FROM THE HOSPITAL.※
WE DIDN'T HOLD A PARTY FOR GRANNY LAST YEAR. WHY NOT?

※HOTORI WAS HOSPITALIZED AFTER GETTING IN AN ACCIDENT.

...BIRTHDAY!

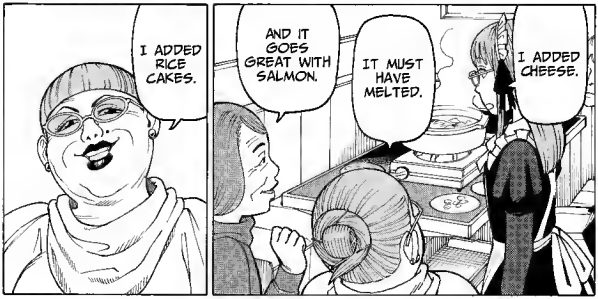

BUT IT'S A LOT THICKER THAN I WAS EXPECTING.
AND IT SMELLS NICE.
IT LOOKS NORMAL... IT'S A CREAMY COLOR...
HUH?

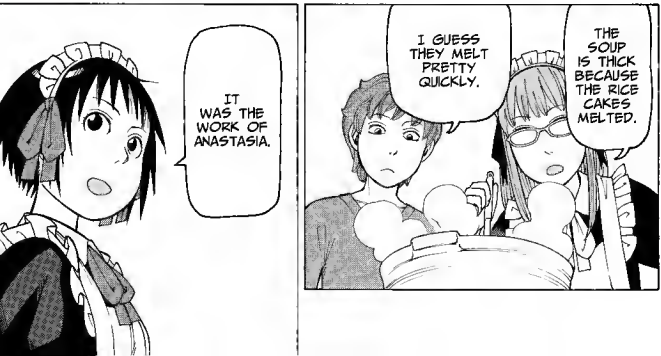
I'M GUESSING YOU JUST WANTED AN EXCUSE TO DO A MYSTERY POT.
IT'S MY BIRTHDAY, AND I HAVE TO SUFFER FIRST?
THE HONOR'S ALL YOURS, CHIEF MAID.
MUTTER
MUTTER

WHAT?!
...
IT'S GOOD.
SIP
ズル
THE INGREDI-ENTS ARE SALMON AND RADISH...
WHOA! IT REALLY IS GOOD!
MUNCH
はむっ
NO WAY...
WAIT!
THE SOUP IS WONDERFUL WITH SALMON.

HOW CAN THERE ONLY BE TWO INGREDIENTS, SALMON AND RADISH?!
THERE WERE ONE... TWO... THREE...
SIX PEOPLE PARTICIPATING!
THAT CAN'T BE RIGHT!
SURE. I ADDED THE RADISH.
WHY DON'T EACH OF YOU CAN TELL US WHAT YOU ADDED?
YES, THAT IS RATHER ODD...
THERE MUST BE SOME KIND OF TRICK INVOLVED.
OH, IT ALL SANK TO THE BOTTOM.
THERE'S OUR THIRD INGREDIENT.
I ADDED CANNED CORN.
...THE SALMON WAS ME.
AS YOU MIGHT GUESS...

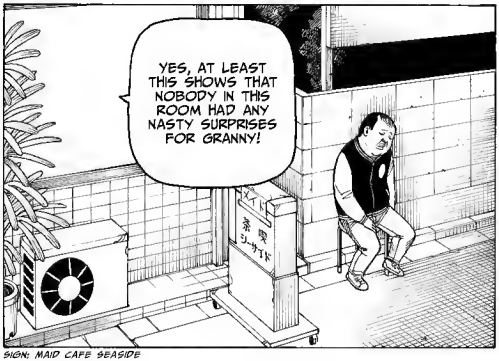
PACKAGE: CUP SOUP, CORN FLAVOR



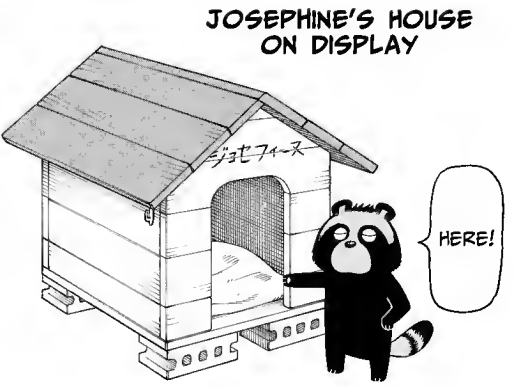


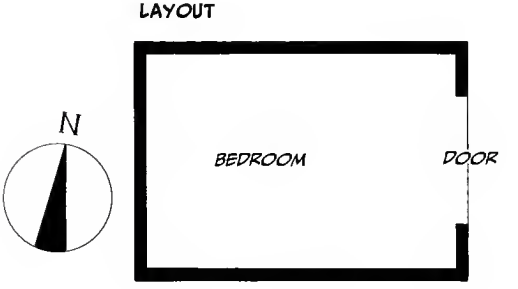
Anastasia...?!
WHO'S THAT?
OH, I SEE!
IT WAS DIAS-TASE.
I DON'T KNOW THE TERM, BUT WHEN YOU COOK RADISH AND RICE CAKES TOGETHER, THE RICE CAKES MELT.
WAIT... WAS IT PESCA-TORA?
CAPRIC-CIOSA? ASTRO-NAUTS?
SOME-THING LIKE THAT...
ER... NO...
WAIT, HOLD ON! ARE YOU CALLING MY OMELETS GARBAGE?!
...AND THEN THIS MYSTERY POT TURNS OUT TO BE GOOD...
IT'S FUNNY, THOUGH. TRY TO COOK SOMETHING GOOD AND END UP WITH GARBAGE...

WELL...
AT LEAST THIS SHOWS THAT NOBODY IN THIS ROOM...
...HAD ANY NASTY SURPRISES FOR GRANNY.
ガラン
カラン
RATTLE
RATTLE
SLAM
バーン
SORRY ABOUT BEING LATE!!
OH, IS THE MYSTERY POT ALREADY OVER?!
DARN. I WANTED TO PARTICIPATE.
LOOK!
I BROUGHT BLUE-BERRY JAM.
HEH! PACKS A REAL PUNCH!!
おめでとう
スッ
SLIDE

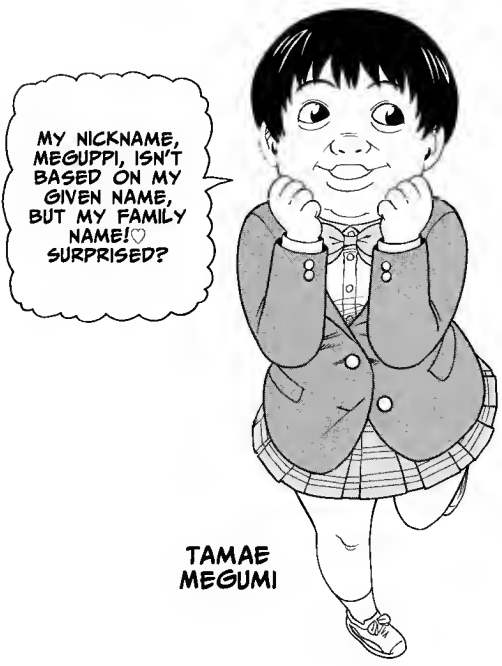


SIGN: MAID CAFE SEASIDE


JOSEPHINE'S HOUSE
ON DISPLAY
ジョセフィーヌ
HERE!


LAYOUT
N
BEDROOM
DOOR

MEGUPPI'S SECRET♡

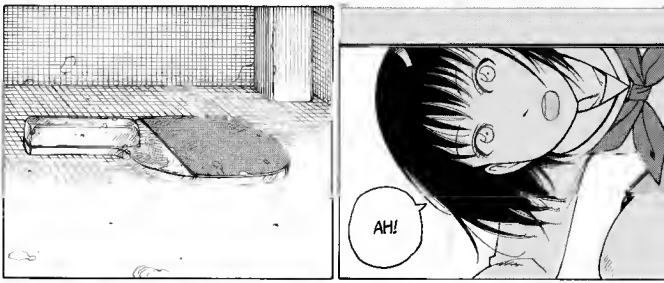


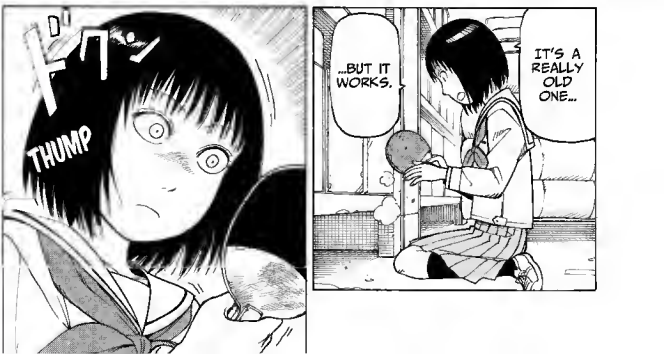
BUILDING: SOUTH THIRD MIDDLE SCHOOL / SHIRTS: CLASS 2-KILL DEATHYAMA, KILLSAKI

CHAPTER III PING PONG GIRL OF DARKNESS

WAIT!
WAIT, NEW STUDENT!
AS YOU CAN SEE, THERE ARE TWO OF THEM AGAINST ONE OF ME. ISN'T THAT COWARDLY?
UH... SURE...?
PLEASE BE MY DOUBLES PARTNER!
BUT I'VE NEVER PLAYED PING PONG BEFORE...
I CAN FEEL AN IMMENSE QUANTITY OF PING PONG ENERGY WITHIN YOU...
WHY DON'T YOU TRY HOLDING A PADDLE?
THERE SHOULD BE ONE IN THE STORAGE ROOM! GO FIND IT!

SIGN: GYM STORAGE ROOM

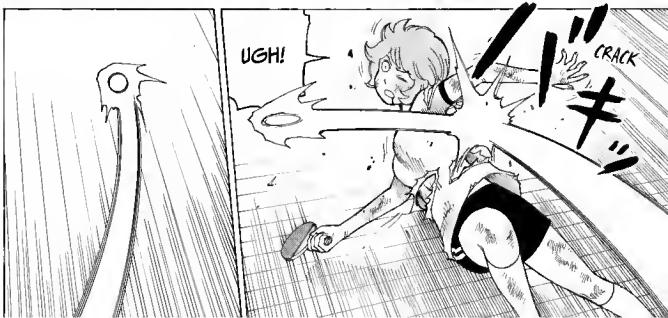




WH... WHAT WAS THAT...
...JUST NOW?
!
WHOA! A GHOST!!
Wait... you can see me?!
Long story short, fifty years ago, I was on my way to the ping pong world championship...
...when I got in a car accident and became a ghost.
I have been waiting fifty years for someone who can see me! Let me play ping pong one more time!
WHAT?!

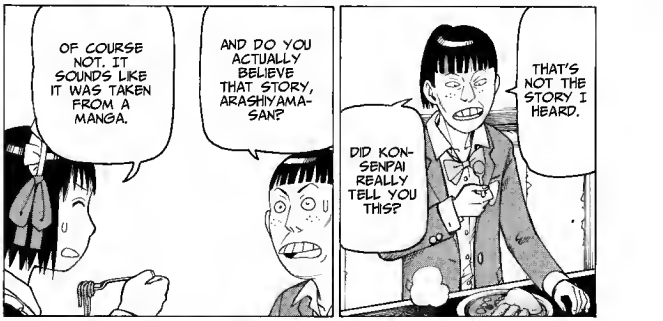
体育用具室
ヒヤッ
FLASH
Okay, Futaba! I'm going to borrow your body!
WHAAAAT?!
OH... IT'S KON FUTABA...
What is your name, young lady?

ボゴッ
WHACK
GYAH HA HA HA! LOOKS LIKE YOUR PARTNER RAN AWAY!!
THAT'S GAME SET!!
2－殺
デス山


UGH!
バキッ
CRACK

LOOK OUT!
ZOOM
キュウウン
HORRRR
ギャルルルル
ガッ
THWACK
ドン
WHAM
Game set? No...
One more game!!

...
...DEFEATED THE PING PONG KING AND BEGAN HER QUEST TO DEFEAT THE BLACK PING PONG SOCIETY.
THAT'S WHEN SHE GOT HER FANGS.
AND THAT'S HOW KON-SENPAI...
メイド
喫茶
シーサイド
SIGN: MAID CAFE SEASIDE

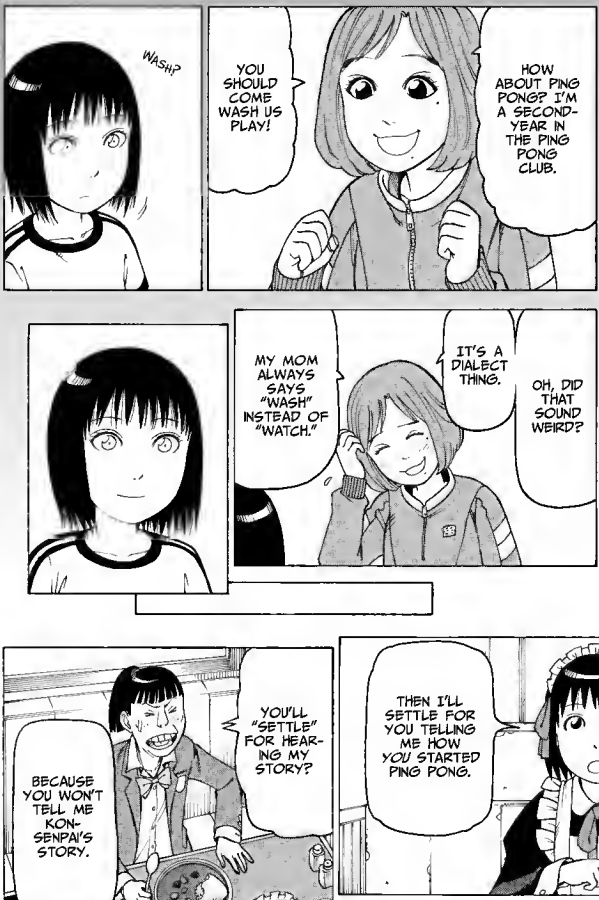

OF COURSE NOT. IT SOUNDS LIKE IT WAS TAKEN FROM A MANGA.
AND DO YOU ACTUALLY BELIEVE THAT STORY, ARASHIYAMA-SAN?
DID KON-SENPAI REALLY TELL YOU THIS?
THAT'S NOT THE STORY I HEARD.

YOU MEAN SHE DOESN'T USUALLY?
WHAAAT? I DIDN'T KNOW SHE JOKED AROUND LIKE THAT.
BUT KON-SENPAI WAS THE ONE WHO TOLD ME THE STORY...

WHAT WAS THE STORY YOU HEARD, HARIBARA-SAN?
WELL, MAYBE SHE ONLY MADE UP THAT STORY BECAUSE IT WAS YOU.
HM...
MEANIE! WHY NOT?!
...I WON'T TELL YOU.
ABOUT HOW KON-SENPAI STARTED PING PONG?
TELL ME THE REAL STORY!
体育用具室
YOU SHOULD ASK HER TO TELL YOU.

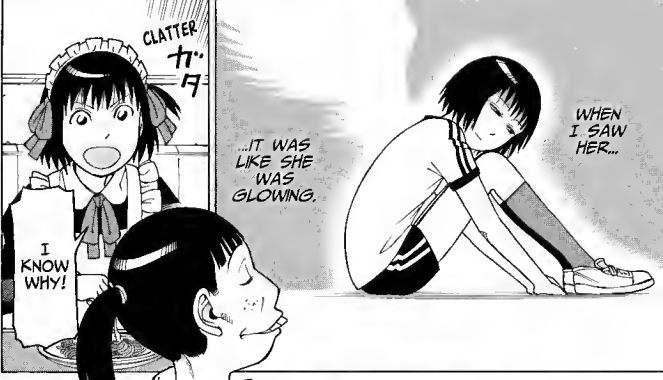
DONE.
南三中
1-2
紺
SHIRT: SOUTH THIRD MIDDLE, CLASS 1-2 KON
OOF.
OKAY.
ガタッ RATTLE
WAH!
THE LID'S NOT SHUT!
!
WAAAAH!
ガッコッコッ
PING
PONG
PING

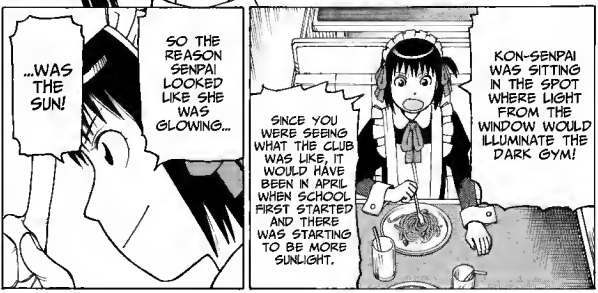
HUH?
THRUST
GRAB
REACH
YOU HAVE INSANE REFLEX-ES!
OR DO YOU HAVE GOOD EYES?
WHAT? YOU GRABBED THEM ALL ALREADY?!
NO...
ARE YOU A FIRST-YEAR? HAVE YOU JOINED A CLUB YET?


WASH?
YOU SHOULD COME WASH US PLAY!
HOW ABOUT PING PONG? I'M A SECOND-YEAR IN THE PING PONG CLUB.
MY MOM ALWAYS SAYS "WASH" INSTEAD OF "WATCH."
IT'S A DIALECT THING.
OH, DID THAT SOUND WEIRD?
BECAUSE YOU WON'T TELL ME KON-SENPAI'S STORY.
YOU'LL "SETTLE" FOR HEAR-ING MY STORY?
THEN I'LL SETTLE FOR YOU TELLING ME HOW *YOU* STARTED PING PONG.

SHIRTS: CLASS 5-3 HARIBARA, MOBU

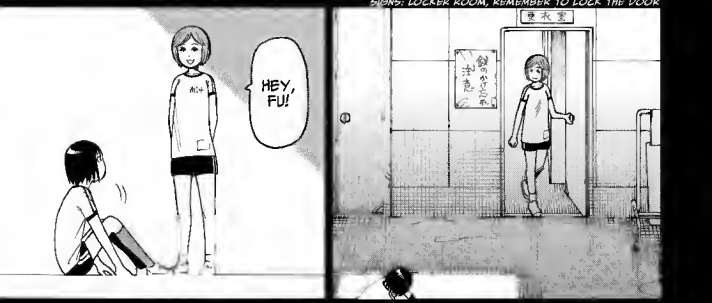
SIGN: GYMNASIUM 2

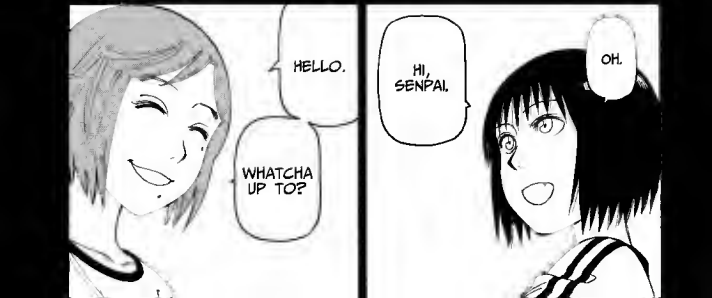

CLATTER
I KNOW WHY!
...IT WAS LIKE SHE WAS GLOWING.
WHEN I SAW HER...

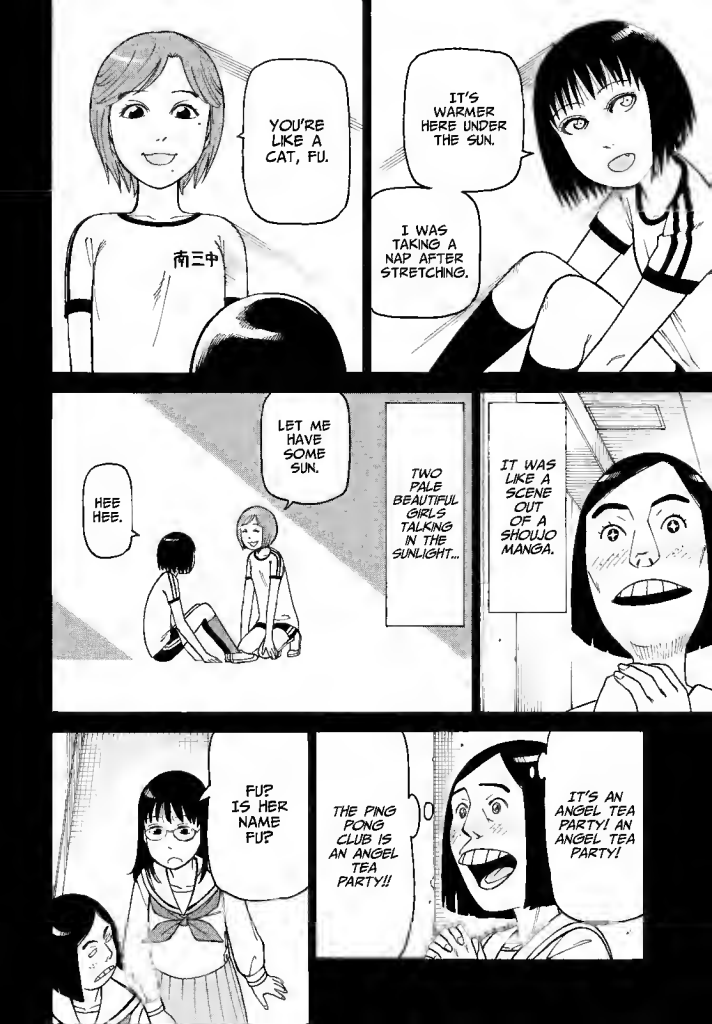

...WAS THE SUN!
SO THE REASON SENPAI LOOKED LIKE SHE WAS GLOWING...
SINCE YOU WERE SEEING WHAT THE CLUB WAS LIKE, IT WOULD HAVE BEEN IN APRIL WHEN SCHOOL FIRST STARTED AND THERE WAS STARTING TO BE MORE SUNLIGHT.
KON-SENPAI WAS SITTING IN THE SPOT WHERE LIGHT FROM THE WINDOW WOULD ILLUMINATE THE DARK GYM!

PLEASE CONTINUE.
SORRY... IT'S A BAD HABIT...
BUT WOULD YOU STOP INTERRUPTING MY STORY WITH YOUR DETECTIVE WORK?
UH... TH-THAT'S CORRECT... YOU'RE ABSOLUTELY RIGHT...

SIGNS: LOCKER ROOM, REMEMBER TO LOCK THE DOOR

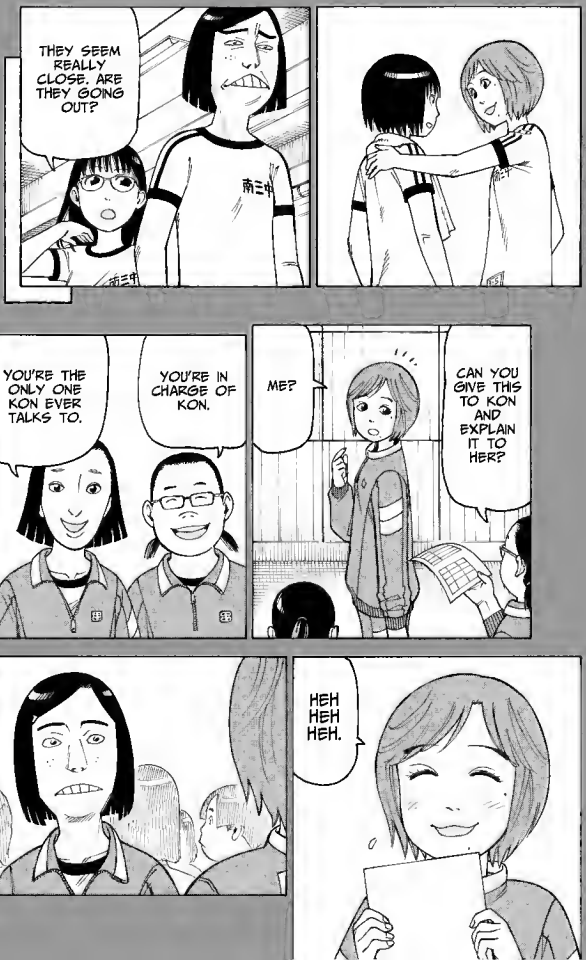





IT'S WARMER HERE UNDER THE SUN.
I WAS TAKING A NAP AFTER STRETCHING.
YOU'RE LIKE A CAT, FU.
南三中
IT WAS LIKE A SCENE OUT OF A SHOUJO MANGA.
TWO PALE BEAUTIFUL GIRLS TALKING IN THE SUNLIGHT...
LET ME HAVE SOME SUN.
HEE HEE.
IT'S AN ANGEL TEA PARTY! AN ANGEL TEA PARTY!
THE PING PONG CLUB IS AN ANGEL TEA PARTY!!
FU? IS HER NAME FU?

I'VE DECIDED TO JOIN THE PING PONG CLUB!!
TATSUNO-SAN, WOULD YOU BE QUIET...
"FU"... WHAT COUNTRY IS SHE FROM? IS SHE CHINESE?
IF YOU'RE HIT IN THE HEAD, YOUR SKULL WILL CRACK WIDE OPEN!
COME ON, FIRST-YEARS! KEEP HITTING THE BALL!
BUT IT TURNED OUT TO BE A HARDCORE SPORTS CLUB.
...SORRY. ANYWAY, ONE OF THE REASONS I JOINED THE PING PONG CLUB WAS BECAUSE I REALLY ADMIRED KON-SENPAI.
LET ME JUST SAY THAT WHEN YOU START MIXING LIES INTO YOUR STORY, I CAN'T TELL WHICH PARTS ARE TRUE.
WHEN I WAS A FIRST-YEAR, I ONLY EVER GOT TO HIT IRON BALLS, SINCE THEY DIDN'T LET US USE PING PONG BALLS.

LET'S GO ASK KON-SENPAI HOW TO BACK-HAND!
STOP! DON'T YOU SEE THE BARRIER AROUND HER THAT SAYS SHE DOESN'T WANT PEOPLE TALKING TO HER?
BUT I DIDN'T GIVE UP.
KON-SENPAI!
SORRY.
WE'LL CONTINUE THIS LATER.
FU!


THEY SEEM REALLY CLOSE. ARE THEY GOING OUT?
南三中
南三中
南三中
CAN YOU GIVE THIS TO KON AND EXPLAIN IT TO HER?
ME?
YOU'RE IN CHARGE OF KON.
YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE KON EVER TALKS TO.
HEH HEH HEH.

HUH?
HARI-BARA-SAN!
...BARA-SAN.
YEAH...
KON-SENPAI ACTED LIKE SHE DIDN'T WANT PEOPLE TALKING TO HER, BUT YOU TALKED TO HER ANYWAY...
SORRY. WHAT WERE WE TALKING ABOUT?
BUT...
WHEN KON-SENPAI BECAME A THIRD-YEAR, THE OLDER STUDENT SHE WAS FRIENDS WITH GRADUATED...
...AND SHE BECAME A LOT MORE DIFFICULT TO APPROACH.

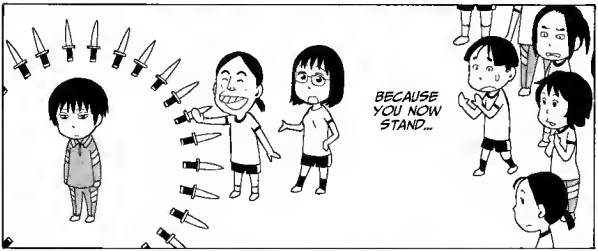
HARIBARA-SAN, YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE KON-SENPAI TALKS TO.
WELL, I GUESS SHE TALKS TO TATSUNO-SAN SOMETIMES.
ISN'T KON-SENPAI SCARY?
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? KON-SENPAI'S A NICE PERSON.
WELL, I GUESS SHE ONLY LETS HER GUARD DOWN AROUND ME.
AND AROUND TATSUNO-SAN SOMETIMES.
南三中
HARIBARA!
TATSUNO!
YES!!
WHAT IS IT?
I HAVE A FAVOR TO ASK, SINCE YOU'VE BOTH DISPLAYED REMARKABLE SKILL.

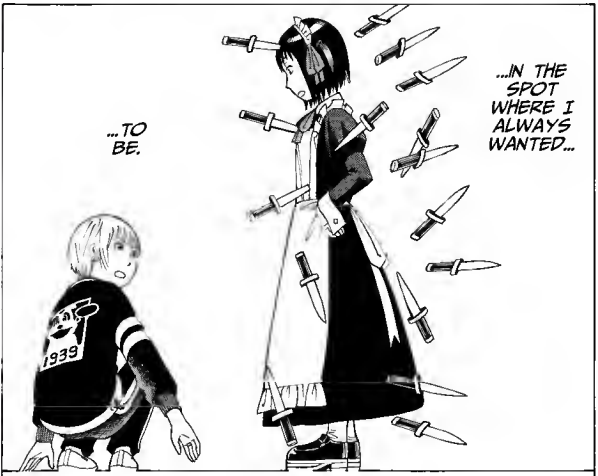
WH... WHAT DID YOU SAY?!
YOU SEE...
...MY DAD IS THE PING PONG KING, LEADER OF THE BLACK PING PONG SOCIETY.
WELL... I DON'T MIND...
YES!!
WILL YOU JOIN ME AND WORK FOR THE BLACK PING PONG SOCIETY?
南三

SIGN: COFFEE SEASIDE

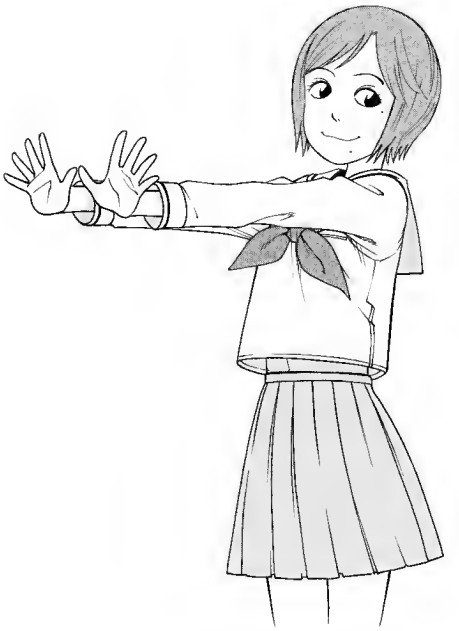
OKAY, TIME TO GO HOME... THANKS FOR THE FOOD.
NOW, WAIT JUST A MINUTE!!
COFFEE
シーサイド
HOW MUCH OF THAT WAS MADE UP? WHEN DID YOU START MAKING STUFF UP?!
H-HOLD ON!
AND THAT WAS HOW I JOINED TH...

HEY! YOU HEAR ME?!
YOU KNOW, THE STORY ISN'T THAT IMPORTANT, ARASHIYAMA-SAN...


BECAUSE YOU NOW STAND...


...IN THE SPOT WHERE I ALWAYS WANTED...
...TO BE.
1939

SHIRT: ZANARI
南三中
3-5
座成
THOUGH IT CERTAINLY ISN'T...
...AS PRETTY OF A SIGHT.



TITLE: **CONCERN**

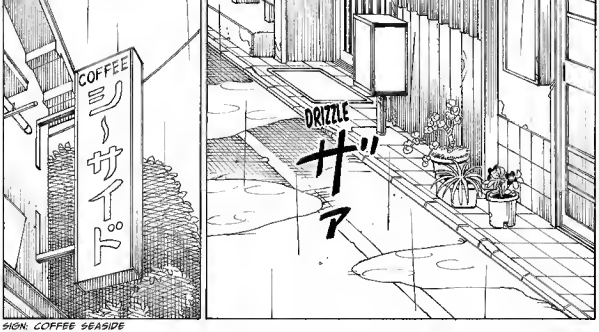
"IMAGINE YOU COULD ONLY EAT ONE KIND OF FOOD FOR THE REST OF YOUR LIFE. I'VE NARROWED IT DOWN TO BUTTER CHICKEN CURRY OR GREEN CURRY, BUT..."

"DON'T ASK ME!!"

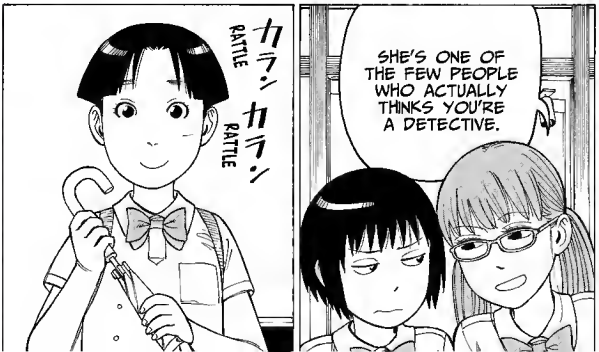
WHAT ARE WE SUPPOSED TO DO WITH THIS...?
I GUESS WE START BY TAKING IT APART...
WHERE DO WE BURY IT?
WE COULD BURY IT SOME-WHERE.
WAIT.
I HAVE A GOOD IDEA.

CHAPTER 112 CURSED VIDEO

OBK



SIGN: COFFEE SEASIDE

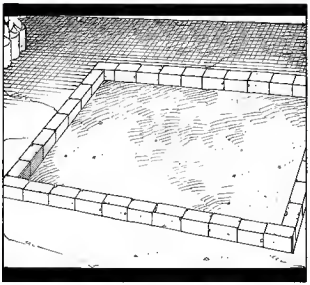


THEN, UM... ARASHIYAMA-SAN.
STOP THAT! WHEN YOU TREAT ME WITH RESPECT, IT FEELS LIKE YOU'RE MOCKING ME!
ARASHI-YAMA-SENSEI!
PLEASE HEAR ME OUT!
...SO SOME OF THIS FOOTAGE COULD BE VERY VALUABLE.
ONE OF OUR ALUMNI WENT ON TO BECOME A MOVIE DIRECTOR...
I'VE BEEN CLEANING UP ALL OF THE FILM SOCIETY'S FILM AND VIDEO TAPES AND TRANSFERRING THEM TO DVDs.
I JUST HEARD SUZUKI MENTION THAT!
"YOU'RE A DIFFICULT PERSON TO TALK TO.
CLAP!
ピ〜ン JUMP
WOW!
WHAT POWERS OF DE-DUCTION!
ARE YOU HELPING SUZUKI?
CLAP

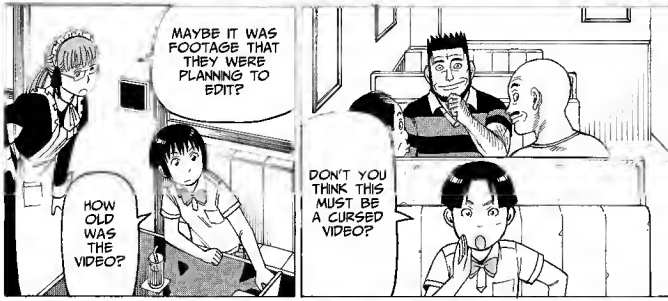
AND, AND, AND...
I FOUND SOMETHING WEIRD IN THE PROCESS...
HERE IT IS!
THIS IS A BURNED COPY, NOT THE ORIGINAL.
I CAN SEE THAT.
I'LL WATCH IT WHEN I GET HOME.
BUT YOU CAN WATCH IT NOW.
ON THIS CHEAP PORTABLE DVD PLAYER!
YOU DIDN'T NEED TO MENTION "CHEAP."
YOU CAME PREPARED.
OH, YEAH. YOU BET. ABSOLUTELY. POSITIVELY.
YEAH, YEAH. HURRY UP.
WHIRRRR

CLICK
CLICK
A PIANO... IS THIS A MUSIC ROOM...?
RUSTLE
RUSTLE
LOOKS LIKE FOOTAGE OF OYA HIGH SCHOOL...

SIGN: PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE



ALL OF THE OTHER FILM SOCIETY VIDEOS WERE MORE, YOU KNOW...
IT WAS EASY TO TELL THAT THEY WERE WORKS OF FICTION!
THIS ONE HAD AN ENTIRE SEGMENT FOCUSED ENTIRELY ON A CREEPY WELL...


MAYBE IT WAS FOOTAGE THAT THEY WERE PLANNING TO EDIT?
HOW OLD WAS THE VIDEO?
DON'T YOU THINK THIS MUST BE A CURSED VIDEO?

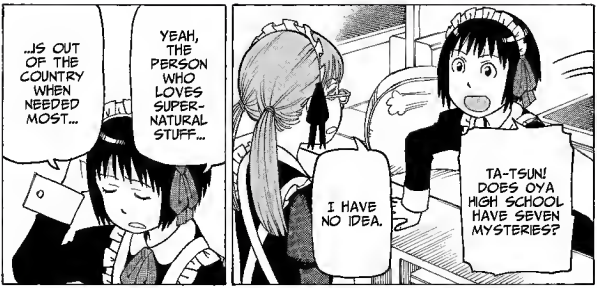
MACK-EREL.
AND WHAT HAPPENS IN OCTO-BER?
AHA.
THE DATE ON THE VIDEO WAS OCTOBER 12, TWENTY-SIX YEARS AGO.
I'D SAY LOTUS ROOTS... MAYBE MUSHROOMS...

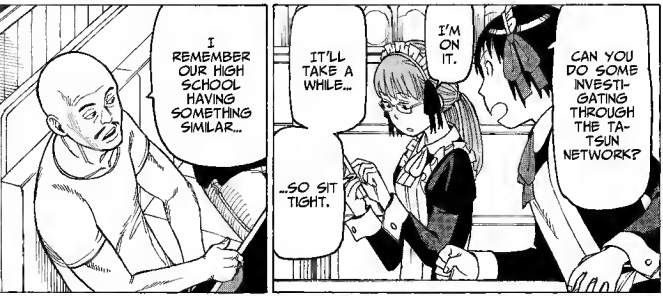
RIGHT!
THE SCHOOL FESTIVAL.
GINKGO NUTS.
IT'S A COMPLETE OR NEAR-COMPLETE VERSION OF THE VIDEO THEY USED AT THE SCHOOL FESTIVAL TWENTY-SIX YEARS AGO.
THAT ISN'T A CURSED VIDEO.
AND THERE'S NEVER ENOUGH TIME TO COMPLETE A FILM...
THE FILM SOCIETY HAS TWO CHANCES TO SHOW OFF: THE CLUB ORIENTATION IN APRIL AND THE SCHOOL FESTIVAL IN OCTOBER.
YEAH... BYE.
I'LL THINK IT OVER A LITTLE MORE.
YOU DON'T SEEM TO BELIEVE ME...

THE VIDEO GOES THROUGH SEVEN DIFFERENT SCENES, SPENDING FIFTEEN SECONDS ON EACH... I'VE WATCHED IT TOO MANY TIMES.
HMM.

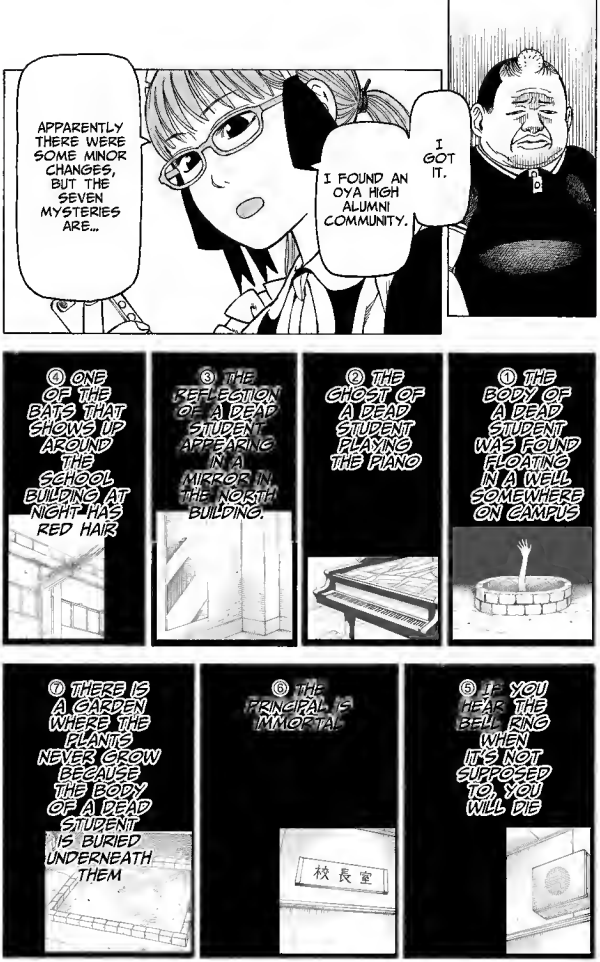
...SPELL OUT A SEVEN-LETTER WORD.
AND THEY DON'T HAPPEN TO...
THERE'S NO CONNECTION BETWEEN THE SCENES...
I'M PRETTY SURE YOU'D HAVE TO ASK SOMEONE WHO WAS IN THE FILM SOCIETY TWENTY-SIX YEARS AGO TO GET AN ANSWER.
ブツブツ
MUMBLE MUMBLE

THEY WERE INTRODUCING THE SEVEN MYSTERIES OF OUR SCHOOL!
YES!
AH!
SEV...
NOD
NOD
ウン
ウン
AND THERE WAS SOMETHING REFLECTED IN THE MIRROR...
THE PIANO WAS PLAYING...


TA-TSUN! DOES OYA HIGH SCHOOL HAVE SEVEN MYSTERIES?
I HAVE NO IDEA.
YEAH, THE PERSON WHO LOVES SUPER-NATURAL STUFF...
...IS OUT OF THE COUNTRY WHEN NEEDED MOST...

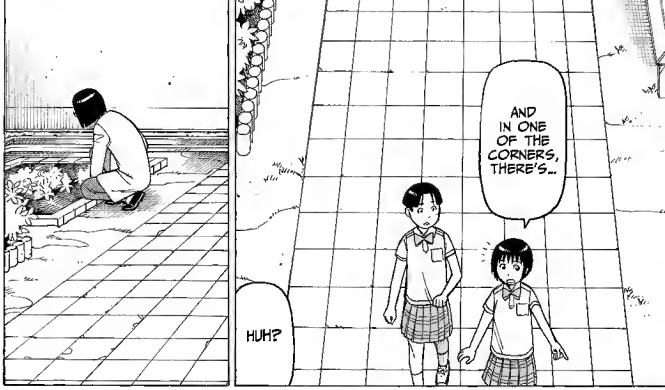

CAN YOU DO SOME INVESTI-GATING THROUGH THE TA-TSUN NETWORK?
I'M ON IT.
IT'LL TAKE A WHILE...
...SO SIT TIGHT.
I REMEMBER OUR HIGH SCHOOL HAVING SOMETHING SIMILAR...

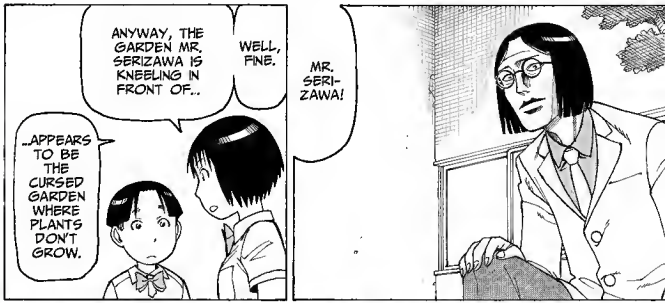
YEAH.
LEGEND SAYS THAT THE FIRST GANG LEADER AT OUR SCHOOL...
...LEFT HIS UNIFORM SOME-WHERE.
WHAT?! IS THAT TRUE?
SHRUG
クイッ


I GOT IT.
I FOUND AN OYA HIGH ALUMNI COMMUNITY.
APPARENTLY THERE WERE SOME MINOR CHANGES, BUT THE SEVEN MYSTERIES ARE...
① THE BODY OF A DEAD STUDENT WAS FOUND FLOATING IN A WELL SOMEWHERE ON CAMPUS
② THE GHOST OF A DEAD STUDENT PLAYING THE PIANO
③ THE REFLECTION OF A DEAD STUDENT APPEARING IN A MIRROR IN THE NORTH BUILDING.
④ ONE OF THE BATS THAT SHOWS UP AROUND THE SCHOOL BUILDING AT NIGHT HAS RED HAIR
⑤ IF YOU HEAR THE BELL RING WHEN IT'S NOT SUPPOSED TO, YOU WILL DIE
⑥ THE PRINCIPAL IS IMMORTAL
校長室
⑦ THERE IS A GARDEN WHERE THE PLANTS NEVER GROW BECAUSE THE BODY OF A DEAD STUDENT IS BURIED UNDERNEATH THEM

SIGN: PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE

DING DONG キーン コーン
THERE YOU GO.
THE FILM WAS MADE TWENTY-SIX YEARS AGO...
...TO INTRODUCE THE SEVEN MYSTERIES OF OYA HIGH.
HAPPY NOW?
WOW! WOW!
THAT MAKES TOTAL SENSE!
NO WONDER THEY CALL YOU A REAL-LIFE SHERLOCK HOLMES!
YOU SHOULDN'T BE CONTENT WITH THAT!
WHAAAT?!
I'M PRETTY SURE THAT THE VIDEO IS INTRODUCING THE SEVEN MYSTERIES OF OUR SCHOOL...
...BUT I JUST SPENT OUR LAST BREAK LOOKING FOR THE PLACES WHERE THE FILMING WAS DONE.
THE BUILDING HAS BARELY CHANGED, SO MOST OF THE PLACES WERE EASY TO FIND.


AND IN ONE OF THE CORNERS, THERE'S...
HUH?


MR. SERI-ZAWA!
WELL, FINE.
ANYWAY, THE GARDEN MR. SERIZAWA IS KNEELING IN FRONT OF...
...APPEARS TO BE THE CURSED GARDEN WHERE PLANTS DON'T GROW.

I CAN'T FIND A WELL ANY-WHERE...
IT'S BEEN TWENTY-SIX YEARS, SO MAYBE IT'S GONE?
YEAH.

SHE CAN BE A HANDFUL.
I'M VERY CURIOUS...
I UNDERSTAND WHAT THAT WEIRD VIDEO IS ABOUT NOW, SO I'M SATISFIED.
BUT IT LOOKED LIKE A NEW WELL IN THE VIDEO.. WHY WOULD THEY TAKE IT APART?
YOU MENTIONED THAT THERE WERE SOME MINOR CHANGES, RIGHT?
YOU'RE NOT DONE WITH THAT YET?
DON'T TOUCH MY HAIR.
HEY, TA-TSUN. ABOUT THE SEVEN MYSTERIES...
LET'S SEE...
...OR SOMEONE FALLING INTO A WELL?
DID THE PRIOR VERSION MENTION A MISSING STUDENT...

①THERE IS A WELL SOMEWHERE ON THIS CAMPUS

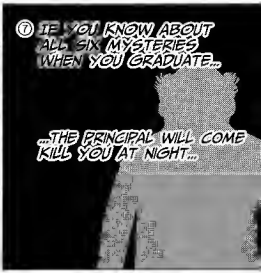
②THE PIANO IN THE MUSIC ROOM PLAYS ITSELF

③THERE IS A MIRROR THAT SHOWS THE REFLECTION OF A GHOST

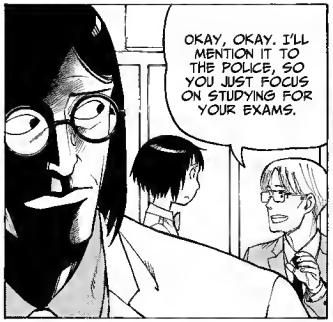
④ONE OF THE BATS IS ACTUALLY A RED PONYTAIL

⑤THE BELL RINGS AT NIGHT WHEN IT'S NOT SUPPOSED TO

⑥THE PRINCIPAL IS IMMORTAL



AND THE RUMORS SURROUNDING THOSE EVENTS LED TO NEW MYSTERIES...?
MAYBE... SOMEONE FELL IN A WELL AND DIED...
↓
THE BODY WAS HIDDEN UNDER A GARDEN...
↓
THE WELL WHERE THE ACCIDENT OCCURRED WAS REMOVED...
SIGN: FACULTY OFFICE
職員室
I HAVE A QUESTION, TEACHER!
OH? WHAT IS IT?
HAVE ANY STUDENTS EVER GONE MISSING AT THIS SCHOOL?
THEN... DO YOU KNOW IF THERE USED TO BE A WELL AT THIS SCHOOL?!
ガックリ
DISAPPOINTED
I HAVE NO IDEA...


OKAY, OKAY. I'LL MENTION IT TO THE POLICE, SO YOU JUST FOCUS ON STUDYING FOR YOUR EXAMS.

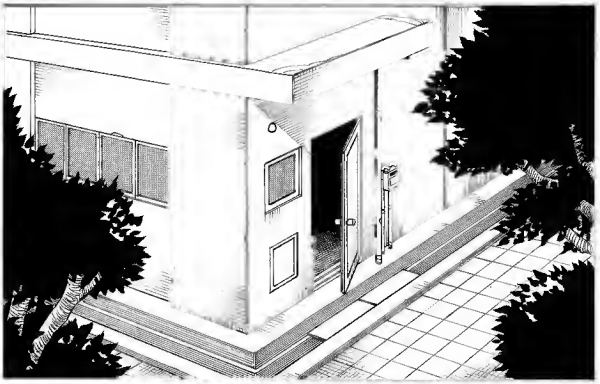
I HAVE A HUNCH THAT THERE WAS SOME KIND OF INCIDENT RELATED TO THAT WELL...

MAYBE I SHOULDN'T HAVE ASKED A TEACHER...

SLAM
バタン

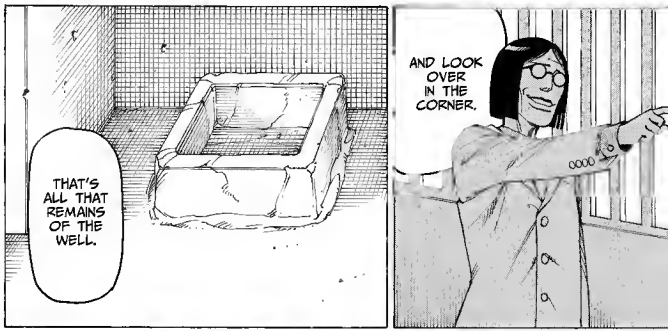
IT'S POSSIBLE THAT THE SCHOOL IS TRYING TO COVER UP THE INCIDENT. THAT WAS A MISTAKE.

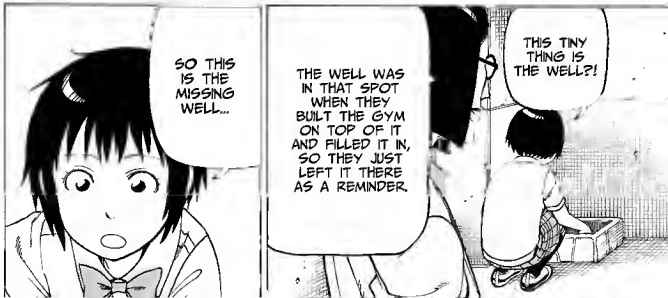
HUH?



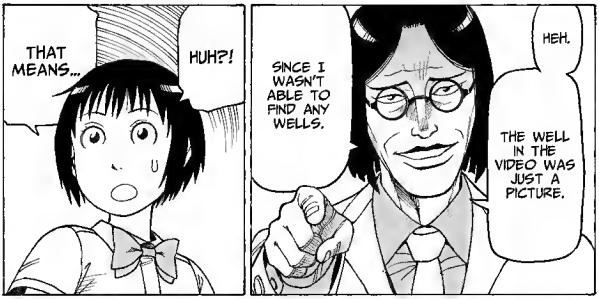
UGH...
WH... WHERE AM I...?

...ARE ALL STORED HERE.
THE CHAIRS THAT MAGICALLY APPEAR DURING GRADUATION...
OH! I SEE.
WE'RE UNDERNEATH THE STAGE IN THE GYM.

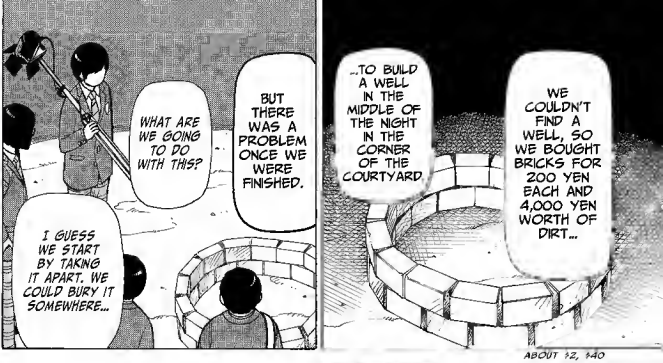

THAT'S ALL THAT REMAINS OF THE WELL.
AND LOOK OVER IN THE CORNER.

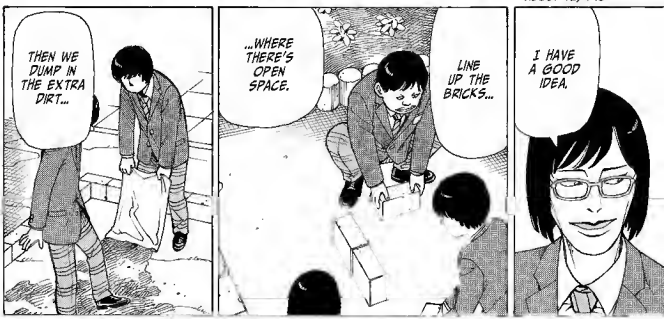

SO THIS IS THE MISSING WELL...
THE WELL WAS IN THAT SPOT WHEN THEY BUILT THE GYM ON TOP OF IT AND FILLED IT IN, SO THEY JUST LEFT IT THERE AS A REMINDER.
THIS TINY THING IS THE WELL?!

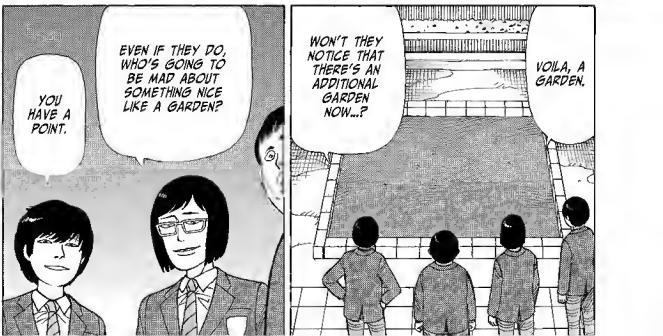
I'M SURPRISED THAT ANY OF THE CURRENT STUDENTS KNOW ABOUT THE SEVEN MYSTERIES.
THEY WERE ALL THE RAGE WHEN I WAS IN HIGH SCHOOL.
I HAPPENED TO SEE A VIDEO THE FILM SOCIETY MADE TWENTY-SIX YEARS AGO...
BUT THE WELL IN THAT VIDEO WAS BIGGER.
YOU COULDN'T FIT A HUMAN IN THIS ONE...


HEH.
THE WELL IN THE VIDEO WAS JUST A PICTURE.
SINCE I WASN'T ABLE TO FIND ANY WELLS.
HUH?!
THAT MEANS...

THE VIDEO YOU SAW...
...WAS PROBABLY THE ONE I MADE WHEN I WAS IN HIGH SCHOOL.
WHAAAAT?!


I GUESS WE START BY TAKING IT APART. WE COULD BURY IT SOMEWHERE...
WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO WITH THIS?
BUT THERE WAS A PROBLEM ONCE WE WERE FINISHED.
...TO BUILD A WELL IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT IN THE CORNER OF THE COURTYARD.
WE COULDN'T FIND A WELL, SO WE BOUGHT BRICKS FOR 200 YEN EACH AND 4,000 YEN WORTH OF DIRT...
ABOUT 32,640


THEN WE DUMP IN THE EXTRA DIRT...
...WHERE THERE'S OPEN SPACE.
LINE UP THE BRICKS...
I HAVE A GOOD IDEA.


YOU HAVE A POINT.
EVEN IF THEY DO, WHO'S GOING TO BE MAD ABOUT SOMETHING NICE LIKE A GARDEN?
WON'T THEY NOTICE THAT THERE'S AN ADDITIONAL GARDEN NOW...?
VOILA, A GARDEN.

A CURSED GARDEN WHERE PLANTS DON'T GROW.
YOU'RE A GENIUS, SERIZAWA!
I KNOW. WE CAN ADD IT TO OUR VIDEO AS ONE OF THE SEVEN MYSTERIES.
BUT WON'T IT SEEM ODD THAT THERE'S NOTHING GROWING IN THAT GARDEN?
SO I DUG IT UP AND TURNED IT INTO A REAL GARDEN.
THE FAKE GARDEN THAT WE COBBLED TOGETHER WAS STILL HERE.
WHEN I CAME BACK TO THIS SCHOOL AS A TEACHER, I WAS SURPRISED.
THAT IS TRUE.
...OR A GARDEN WHERE PLANTS DON'T GROW.
SO THERE'S NO WELL FOR PEOPLE TO FALL INTO...

WOW!
WOW! JUST WOW!
YOU EVEN FOUND OUT WHO MADE THAT ANCIENT VIDEO!!
YOU'RE A REAL SLEUTH!
WELL, I'D SAY I GOT LUCKY THIS TIME.

SO... SO... NOW...
SUZUKI-KUN...
...WANTS TO KNOW THE IDENTITY OF THE PLASTIC FIGURE THAT YOU CAN SEE ON THE SHELF AT THE 4:15 MARK ON THIS VIDEO!
HOW WOULD I KNOW THAT?!

CD CASE 4:15

AND IN THIS VIDEO, AN ASTRONAUT SHOWS UP FOR A SECOND...
STOP DIGGING UP WEIRD VIDEOS AND STUDY FOR YOUR EXAMS!

MYSTERY POT

I THINK A MYSTERY POT IS A TEST OF ANY GENTLEMAN. I TOOK PART IN ONE ONCE, AS A STUDENT.

COLLEGE IS A TIME OF SOLITARY ROOMS, AMIABLE FRIENDS, AND FREE TIME. IT'S DOWNRIGHT UNHEALTHY FOR THOSE CONDITIONS TO NOT LEAD TO A MYSTERY POT.

BUT OURS WAS A COMPLETE FAILURE. EXCITABLE STUDENTS DEMONSTRATED THEIR OWN LACK OF KNOWLEDGE, SIMMERING IN A POT; THE RESULT WAS INEDIBLE GARBAGE. I LEARNED FROM THIS, AND NEVER TOOK PART IN ONE AGAIN.

I DREW "GONE INTO THE DARKNESS" WITH THAT REGRET IN MIND. ONE SHOULD ALWAYS BRING INGREDIENTS THAT WOULD DEFINITELY BE TASTY ON THEIR OWN. WHATEVER YOUR DEFINITION OF HOT POT IS... MIZUTAKI, CHANKO, ISHIKARINABE, SUKIYAKI... BRING AN INGREDIENT COMMONLY USED, AND ENJOY HOW THE FLAVORS BLEND. BRINGING A BANANA OR PUDDING OR MELON BREAD, THINGS THAT WOULD NEVER WORK IN A HOT POT, ARE LESS INGREDIENTS AND MORE INTERLOPERS. WE MUST ALL CORRECT OUR ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT MYSTERY POTS, AND FACE THEM HEAD ON, IN ORDER TO HAVE A GOOD MYSTERY POT LIFE...

MASAKAZU ISHIGURO
石黒正数

ASSISTANTS ***AMANATSU YUZU*** ***ARI***
MIZUTA KAORU